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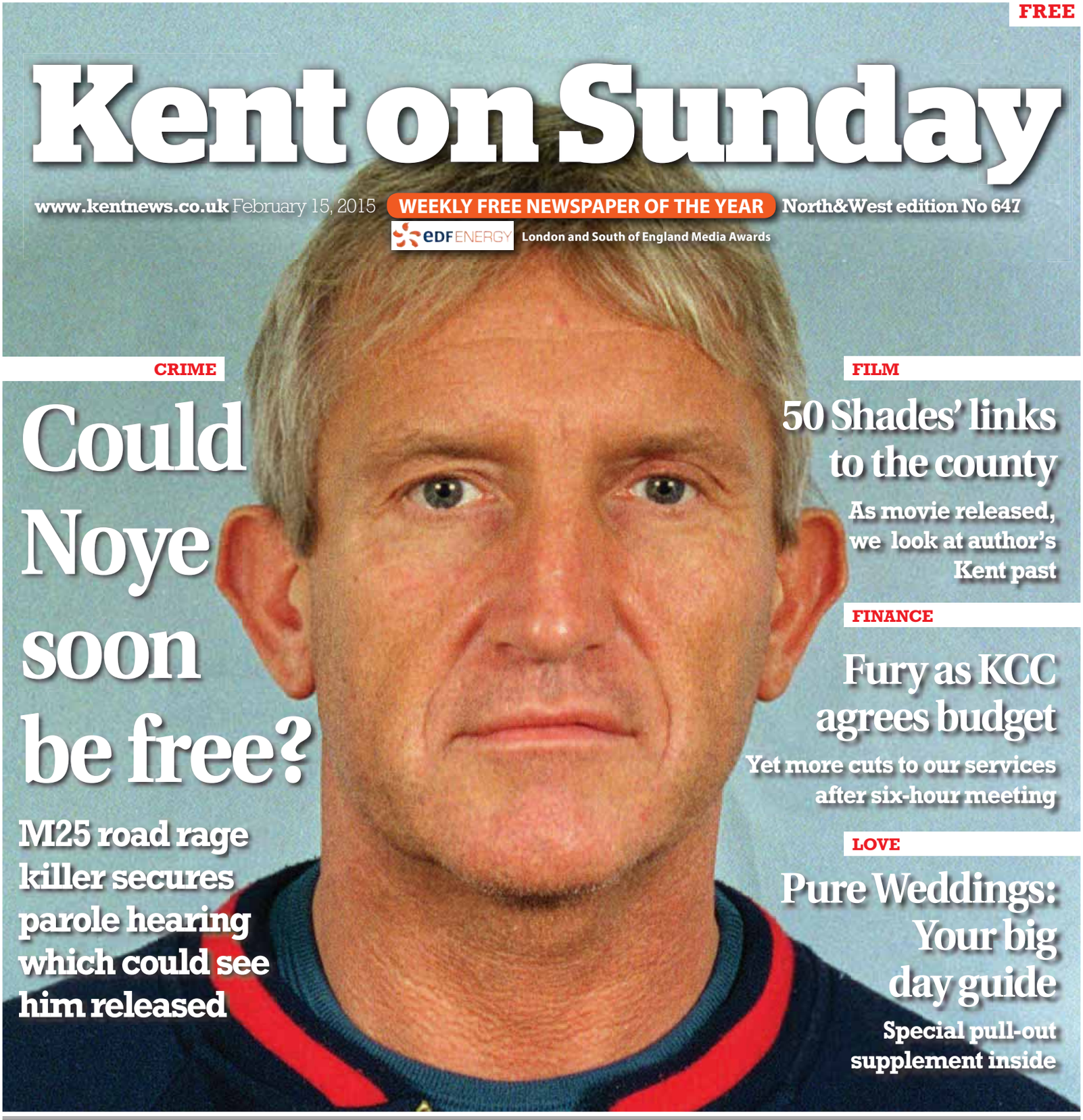

CRIME

Could Noye soon be free?

M25 road rage killer secures parole hearing which could see him released

FILM

50 Shades' links to the county

As movie released, we look at author's Kent past

FINANCE

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When economy picks up will services come back?

DEPENDING on what side of the political divide you find yourself on, you will either feel this week's Kent County Council budget decision is driven by pure hard economics, or a political agenda.

Regardless, the implications of the relentless central Government cuts to local spending is extremely painful and, in this year of a general election, likely to be the basis of much local political discussion over the coming months.

The big question, of course, is just what happens to local authority spending once the economy starts to improve? Arguably, once the clam-like grip on the public purse is loosened, we are quite entitled to see the spending in key services increase dramatically.

We should expect to see facilities run for the good of our communities, operated by publicly-funded organisations so we have an ownership of them. That they are protected.

We do need to all be alive to the danger of steps being taken now in the spirit of austerity which we will never be able to reverse in the future. That is something we need to guard against to ensure any claim of an ideology underpinning the austerity measures is confirmed or denied.

We've got a big article on the KCC debate inside this week's edition. As you can imagine, it has split opinion right down the middle. See page 11.

Another thing to split opinion is the phenomenon that is 50 Shades of Grey. As the movie hits the big screen this weekend, we look at how author EL James went from Kent student to international publishing success story. And a very rich one too. Read more on page 8.

Whatever you get up to, enjoy your weekend.

Editor **Chris Britcher**

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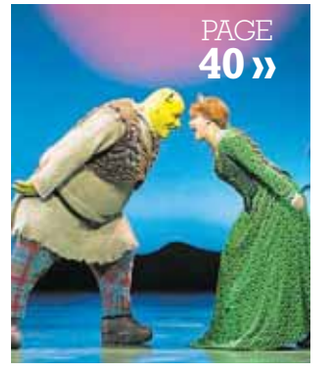

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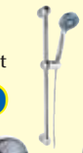

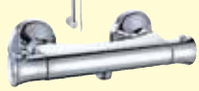

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Finally, academy secures essential funding boost

By Jamie Weir
jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

FIFTEEN of the county's schools have cashed in on a vital share of a £6 billion funding package to improve their sites.

For some schools, the money has been viewed as essential - with both grammars and high schools in desperate need of repairs and renovations.

Among those to receive a share of the funds was Margate's Hartsdown Academy.

It had originally been earmarked to receive money from the Labour Government's Building Schools for the Future programme in 2010. But just weeks before it was due to benefit, the incoming Coalition's then education secretary, Michael Gove, scrapped the scheme.

Two years later, it kept its collective fingers crossed it would secure funds through the Priority School Building Programme.

But when the first 261 schools across the UK were announced, Hartsdown missed out again.

Principal Andrew Somers claimed, as a result, the academy was formed to spend more than £100,000 every year to "keep the building together".

DELIGHTED: Andrew Somers outside the soon-to-be-improved Hartsdown Technology College

This week Mr Somers was told his school would receive millions to invest.

He said: "It has been a long road since the disappointment of missing out of the Building Schools for the Future programme just weeks before we were due to sign that project off. So this is fantastic news."

A full timetable of when work will commence will be revealed in the autumn.

Among the other secondary schools benefitting are Simon Langton Girls' Grammar in Canterbury, Rainham's Howard School, the High Weald Academy in Cranbrook, Faversham's Abbey School, the Mayfield Grammar in Gravesend, Pent Valley in Folkestone, Lenham's Swadelands, St John Fisher in Chatham, Dover Grammar School for Boys, and the Folkestone School for Girls.

Education secretary Nicky Morgan said that the funding was helping to create a level playing field for children, regardless of their background.

She added: "As part of our long term economic plan, we have continued to invest in school buildings which will ensure we can deliver even more great new schools, transform the learning environment for tens of thousands of pupils and their teachers whilst delivering value for money for the taxpayer."

Killer Noye could be out of jail 'in weeks' as he gets parole hearing

M25 road rage killer Kenny Noye could be freed by a probation panel 'within weeks' - some 15 years after he was finally jailed for the brutal roadside stabbing of 21-year-old Stephen Cameron.

Mr Cameron, from Dartford, was killed on the Swanley interchange in 1996. He was stabbed by Noye with a nine-inch knife after an apparent altercation over their driving. He died in the arms of his 17-year-old girlfriend.

Noye fled, however, and was finally tracked down to Spain. He was arrested and found guilty of murder at the Old Baily in 2000.

He was told he should serve a minimum of 16 years behind bars.

But on Friday, the Sun newspaper reported Noye had been granted a Parole Board hearing. And that could result in him finally being freed.

Noye, now 67, lived in West Kingsdown when he attacked Stephen Cameron.

He was certainly no stranger to the police.

He spent eight years in jail for his role in the Brink's-MAT robbery in 1983 - dubbed at the time 'the crime of the century'.

He was part of the gang that stole £26m worth of gold bullion from a warehouse at Heathrow.

As part of the police investigation in 1985, Noye was flagged up as a suspect after jetting to Jersey with a bag stuffed with £50,000 in £50 notes. With his house under surveillance, Noye stabbed to death a police officer he found in the garden of his West Kingsdown home.

However, a jury said it was in self defence and he escaped jail. The following year he was jailed for his role in the robbery. Sentenced to 14 years, he served eight.

Speaking to the Sun, Stephen Cameron's father, Ken, said: "Noye should never be allowed out of prison. He left my son dying in the gutter and fled to Spain. I don't believe for a minute he's changed his ways."

Motorists clocked at 146mph roaring down our motorway

TWO motorists hitting speeds of more than 145mph were clocked on the county's roads, it was revealed this week.

The Institute of Advanced Motorists said both were spotted travelling more than twice as fast as the national speed limit, by cameras on the Kent stretch of the M25 hitting speeds of 146mph; one near Swanley, the other near the Clacket Lane services, close to Sevenoaks.

They were the worst cases of speeding in England, according to the organisation, which said there were just three other motorists in the country who exceeded the 140mph barrier. However, of perhaps greater concern, was the fear the two motorists behind the wheel escaped prosecution.

Wifi boost as Southeastern to offer free web access

THE county's commuters were finally given some good news this week when it was confirmed free wifi would be made available across the Southeastern network from 2017.

Rail minister Claire Perry made the announcement on Wednesday, revealing the Department for Transport has made around £50m worth of funding to install the necessary equipment.

The cash is liberated from money Network Rail, which manages the rail infrastructure, was forced to pay back to the Government for missing punctuality targets.

Commuters have been left fuming recently after services were changed as a result of on-going work at London Bridge.

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Cops and suspect rescued after getting stuck

AN AIR rescue team had to fly to the rescue after a police chase saw both the suspect and pursuing officers get stuck in boggy marshland.

The chase began when a Peugeot van failed to stop for traffic officers at Iron Mill Lane, Crayford, just before 10.30pm on Thursday. After they fled the van, they ran onto Crayford Marshes, chased by police.

A 19-year-old suspect became stuck, prompting emergency teams to rescue him.

He was treated by paramedics showing signs of the onset of hypothermia. He was taken to hospital where he was arrested on vehicle and drug offences.

Police officers stuck were also freed by the helicopter air rescue team.

PM dodges call for fresh look at making a 'living wage' the bare minimum

By Maria Chiorando
maria.chiorando@archant.co.uk

PRIME minister David Cameron has insisted to Kent on Sunday it is up to the employer as to whether they pay the so-called 'living wage' amid mounting concerns the minimum wage is not enough.

On a visit this week to Medway, the Conservative leader was responding to calls the Government should hike up the current minimum wage of £6.50 to help relieve the strain many families are feeling.

Speaking to KoS after touring Chatham-based train and fishing simulator specialists Dovetail Games, he said: "I support the living wage, and think companies and organisations that can pay the living wage should do so but I think it's for them to decide rather than Government to mandate.

"The important thing with the minimum wage is to create conditions where it can go up, and it has just gone up to £6.50 - the first real terms increase there has been since the crash of 2008 and on current forecast it's due to get to above £8 by 2020, and I do support that.

VISIT: David Cameron in Chatham

"Do I want to see increases in the minimum wage? Yes, I do - and I am sure we will.

"The reason for having a low pay commission and having them as independent from government is for them to set what they think is appropriate and won't cause problems, and that's why they do that job.

"The job of government is to try and create the conditions where wages can go up and that's what has happened recently."

With just three months to go before the nation goes to the polls, Mr Cameron has been keen to be seen on the side of business – where he perceives Labour has a weakness.

The whistle-stop tour saw him visit Dovetail, a firm which employed eight people six years ago and now has 98.

The PM said: "We have got the conditions in place for the economic success we're seeing to be felt by everybody. Inflation is low, wages are now growing ahead of inflation, people are getting a pay rise, and that's very good, and we want that to continue."

TRAGIC: Sacha Wheeler

Tribute paid to tragic teen killed by train

THE heart-broken family of tragic Sacha Wheeler - the Canterbury grammar school pupil killed after being hit by a train at a controversial level-crossing in Whitstable - have paid a moving tribute to their "amazing daughter".

Sacha, 14, a student at the Simon Langton Girls' Grammar, was killed on the railway line at the Glebe Way crossing shortly before 6pm last Sunday.

In a statement, her family said: "Our amazing daughter has been taken from us, our hearts are broken and our lives will never be the same again. We want to thank our family, friends and Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School for their unwavering support and kindness towards us at this very difficult time."

British Transport Police officers are appealing for witnesses to the incident which took place at the Glebe Way level crossing.

Detective Constable Paula Eustace said: "I would like to hear from anyone who might have seen Sacha in the minutes before her death. It could be the smallest piece of information, but it might help me piece together what happened."

Network Rail says it is reviewing the future of the crossing, which has seen other tragedies in the past. Contact BTP on 0800 405040.

Hornby to relocate to Discovery Park site

MODEL railway giant Hornby confirmed this week it was to leave its existing home in Margate - and set up a new base within the Discovery Park site in Sandwich.

As of May 1, the company's office-based operations will be housed at a 16,000 sq ft complex within the former Pfizer base. Around 150 staff will be relocated.

Manufacturing its products in Kent ended in the 1990s - much of it now takes place in Asia.

The company, which also produces Airfix kits and Corgi cars, announced last year it intended to leave the site - prompting fears it could leave Kent altogether.

Nick Stone, group finance director, said: "In theory, we could have relocated anywhere.

"However we were intent upon staying in east Kent for a number of reasons, not least because of the many loyal and experienced employees we have here, but also due to the area's regeneration and transport links."

Freeview threat due to arrival of 4G masts

SUPERFAST mobile telecommunication masts on Sheppey could be set to play havoc with digital TV reception.

A number of 4G masts are to be set up around Sheerness to deliver mobile web speeds similar to those experienced at home.

But due to the frequencies used - similar to that utilised by Freeview - it can have an impact on the quality of TV reception. Viewers can suffer from blocky images or loss of sound. Help, however, is at hand.

The company at800 was set up by the mobile operators to provide filters and other assistance to households where TV reception is affected

CEO Ben Roome explained: "The new 4G mobile masts are bringing mobile broadband to Sheerness, but they do have the potential to disrupt TV reception for some households. We're already helping viewers in the area and continue to offer support. We want to ensure that people know it's our role to fix any disruption to Freeview due to 4G at 800 MHz and that there's no charge for our support."

Petition pressure for community council

A PETITION signed by 1,150 residents of Kennington calling for the creation of a community council has been delivered to Ashford Borough Council.

It seeks to bring decision-making on local issues closer to home.

The petition urges the council to conduct a Governance Review with the aim of forming a community council to serve Kennington, Little Burton, Bockhanger and Bybrook. This would have the same rights and responsibilities as a parish council. Signatures have been collected by Kennington Community Forum.

Forum chairman Chris Morley said: "Community councils give neighbourhoods a stronger voice and help people feel more involved in the decisions that affect them.

"The number of signatures we have received is compelling evidence that Kennington needs the same level local representation and service provision that the rural areas of Ashford have had for over 100 years."

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agenda

What will make next week's headlines…

Fire crews prepare for further strike action

HOPES of a breakthrough in the long-running firefighters' dispute over pensions have been extinguished after the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) announced further strike action.

Following a conference in Manchester, it confirmed a 24-hour strike "within the coming weeks".

Walk-outs in the past have seen Kent's fire crews support their union's campaign.

Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, said: "Firefighters are outraged at the behaviour of the Westminster fire minister Penny Mordaunt and her boss Eric Pickles, who misled Parliament by falsely claiming that they had introduced a statutory guarantee that a firefighter failing a fitness test through no fault of their own would receive a full and unreduced pension."

Beach club plans up for discussion at Ramsgate

A STATE-of-the-art beach club, boasting water sports facilities, cafe, restaurant and accommodation is to be considered for a former car park site in Ramsgate.

Thanet District Council will consider the proposals for the Marina Road site when it meets on Thursday.

The potential for the site was identified in the newly adopted Beach Management Plan, as part of a wider review of the district's beaches to improve Thanet's coastal areas.

If the land is released, council officials will begin the process of seeking a suitable developer capable of progressing the concept.

…also

Have a say on pylons

CONSULTATION into the proposed Richborough Connection pylon route, linking Sandwich with Canterbury continues this week.

Launched on Monday, it is likely to be the last chance to have a say on the scheme.

Car park is expanded

COMMUTERS will be able to take advantage of some 142 new car spaces created outside Orpington station.

Unveiled last week, the £1.9 million expansion provides a second tier of parking and improved disabled facilities.

Courier scam warning

POLICE are reminding everyone to be on alert for a scam which sees a fake caller claiming to be from a bank and sending a 'courier' around to collect their bank card.

A series of incident have taken place across the county in recent weeks.

Motorway lane closure

MOTORISTS using the M20 motorway between junction six and five at Maidstone will see a 50mph speed limit and lane closures from 8pm next Saturday to 6am the following day.

It allows for drainage work to take place.

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Fifty Shades of success: Kent's role in EL James' £50m success

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

IT PROVED one of the publishing world's most remarkable recent success stories... and this weekend the phenomenon that is Fifty Shades of Grey makes the inevitable leap to the big screen.

A blend of eroticism and drama, it will be the big hit over this Valentine's weekend.

And all the indications are the film will pump yet more money into the bulging bank account of the author EL James.

But did you know the reclusive millionaire spent her university days in the county?

EL James – real name Erika Mitchell – went to the University of Kent back in the 1980s, where she studied history.

Quite whether it was her university life which would go on to inspire the book remains unknown.

What is for sure, is that 30 years later she would become one of the world's biggest selling authors.

Current estimates suggest that Fifty Shades – and its two sequels, Fifty Shades Darker and Fifty Shades Freed – have sold a staggering 70 million copies worldwide.

The original has become the UK's fastest-selling paperback of all time – a remarkable achievement for it is most definitely an adults-only read.

What's more, it has sparked a whole host of similar books by authors keen to cash in on this demand for saucy novels.

For EL James, now 51, it has delivered riches beyond her wildest dreams.

At its peak, she made £12.6m in just eight months, raking in an incredible £52,000 a day as copies flew off the shelf.

It is thought, in total, she has made in excess of £50m – some £4m of which came for the film rights.

Directed by Sam Taylor-Johnson, and starring Jamie Dornan, as Christian Grey, and Dakota Johnson as Anastasia Steele, the film was premiered on Wednesday to a mixed critical response.

It's unlikely to stop the film becoming one of the year's big hits, however, with two sequels already confirmed - the first of which will appear next year.

For EL James, the success shows no signs of slowing just yet.

Born in 1963, her father was Scottish and a BBC cameraman, her mother from Chile.

She attended the Wycombe High School, a state grammar school for girls in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, before she headed to Canterbury.

Having graduated, she started work as a studio manager's assistant at the National Film and Television School in Beaconsfield – perhaps following in the footsteps of her father who was a BBC cameraman – where she met her future husband Niall Leonard, whom she married in 1987.

As a television producer, she went on to enjoy success with the likes of Kent comedy duo Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer, producing their hit comedy TV panel show Shooting Stars.

Her husband was establishing a name for himself too. A scriptwriter, he wrote for the likes of Irish comedy drama Ballykissangel, Silent Witness, Holby City, Monarch of the Glen and Wild At Heart.

But it would be the passion – quite literally – of Mrs Leonard that would

SO WHAT'S THE FUSS ALL ABOUT?

UNLESS you've been living in a cave for the last few years, there has been no escaping the remarkable phenomenon which is Fifty Shades of Grey.

But unless you've picked up a copy just what is it all about? Without going into too much of the nitty gritty detail, Fifty Shades follows the relationship between shy college graduate Anastasia Steele and the cool, suave business magnate Christian Grey.

To cut a long story short, the book details their erotic pursuits with a heavy focus on such topics as bondage, domination and sado-masochism (BDSM).

It has, as a consequence, not been short of controversy from those who suggest even consensual force is not something worth bringing into the mainstream.

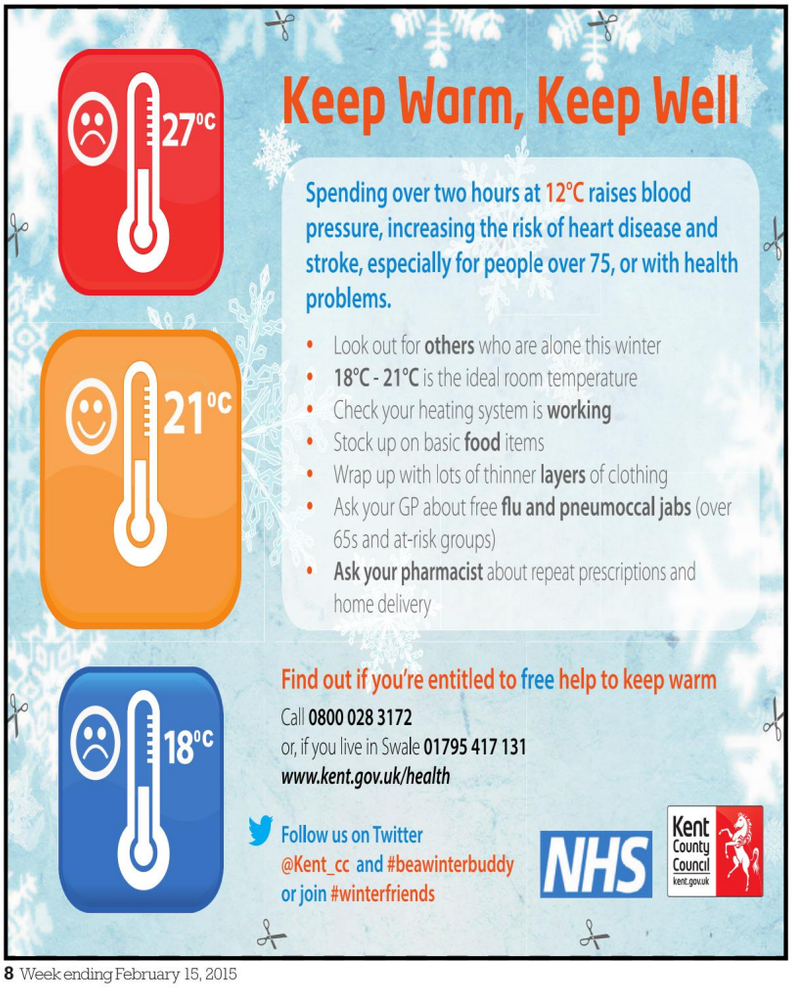
But just why did this book, which was by no means unique in its approach, prove such a runaway hit?

Rowan Pelling, former editor of The Erotic Review, explains: "Don't be distracted by the hoo-ha around the BDSM contained within the novel, for this is S&M lite, presented palatably for the masses.

"This is old-fashioned torrid romance concocted, it would appear, in a crucible of simmering housewifely hormones and dressed up for the 21st century."

The film, however, remains a little bit of a mystery. Critics only got a real chance to view it a few days before release - and that's left many to suggest it may not quite follow in the big money footsteps of the books. We wait to see.

HOT: Stars set to pull in the crowds as film opens this weekend



SUCCESS: EL James is the brains behind a publishing phenomenon

put both of their previous achievements in the shade.

Taking up the pen name Snowqueens Icedragon, she created a piece of fan fiction based on the popular Twilight book and movie series.

Published on the internet, it was well received... and would be the building blocks of what would become the Fifty Shades phenomenon.

She once said: "The explosion of interest has taken me completely by surprise," and added the books are "my midlife crisis, writ large. All my fantasies in there, and that's it."

It may not be quite your cup of tea, but the Fifty Shades series has become a remarkable money-making machine and its release at the cinema is going to do nothing to calm the passion for the series.

Fifty Shades of Grey is on general release (certificate 18) at cinemas across Kent now.

ELLIE HITS THE HIGHS AGAIN TOO

IT IS fitting, surely, that in the 50th anniversary of the University of Kent welcoming its first intake, its former students dominate the main streams of entertainment.

EL James' books may not be everyone's cup of tea but from her time in Canterbury, she has gone on to remarkable success.

And last weekend, connected to that same success, another former student dazzled too.

Singer Ellie Goulding attended the university ten years ago. She didn't complete her drama, politics and English courses, however, after being spotted during a university talent show.

Already a huge hit, last Sunday she secured her second number one hit single.

Love Me Like You Do is taken from the soundtrack to the Fifty Shades movie.

Ellie is certainly no stranger to the county.

Four years ago she made a memorable return to headline the 2011 Lounge on the Farm music festival in the city.

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Job cuts loom as opponents hit out at 'toughest KCC budget yet'

Jamie Weir on the six-hour debate which ended up in a further £83.1m being slashed from services

COUNCIL: A meeting on Thursday saw councillors finally back the Conservative administration's budget for the year ahead.

UP to 400 jobs are set to be lost at County Hall, after councillors approved what was branded a 'budget for the few, not the many', by one political leader.

After a lengthy debate in the council chambers, the budget will make savings of £83.1 million between 2015 and 2016.

It comes after central funding from Westminster was slashed once again as part of the Coalition's austerity drive.

A significant chunk of saving will come from the provision of adult and children's services.

But the Conservative administration's proposed budget faced a rough ride.

Not, it appeared, anyone at County Hall genuinely thought it would fail to be given the seal of approval.

Red-faced bosses were forced to admit the council's press office had issued a statement to the media before the meeting had even started saying it had been approved.

Leader Paul Carter said: "We needed to make £83.1m of savings. We've done that.

"We've preserved and protected front line services and our hope and expectation is that many of those services will go on and continuously improve.

"They may be delivered in slightly different ways but the goal is to make less money go further and support our residents in a good if not better way.

"The outlook is pretty gloomy. Live with it, innovate, transform and we might be able to continue supporting our residents."

> **"The outlook is pretty gloomy. Live with it, innovate, transform and we might be able to continue supporting our residents"**
>
> **Paul Carter,** leader of Kent County Council

As expected, we'll all be expected to dip into our pockets too, with a rise of just under two per cent in our council tax bills.

But political opponents rounded on the Tory group.

During the debate, leader of the main opposition on the council, Roger Latchford of Ukip, took aim at what he called the council's 'vanity projects'.

He told the chamber organisations like Visit Kent, Produced in Kent and Locate in Kent - which seek to promote the county and, according to the Ukip leader, receive funding of around £3m from KCC - should have their costs examined, as 'significant savings could be made'.

Cllr Latchford also said the council should shut its Brussels office and youth centre at Hardelot in France to save cash.

He was also not alone in demanding the street lights - switched off in some areas in a bid to save around £1m - should go back on.

LEADER: Tory chief Paul Carter

Gordon Cowan, leader of the Labour group on the council, said money was still being frittered on unnecessary schemes.

He cited the £2.5m spent chasing Government approval for a grammar school in Sevenoaks as cash it could ill afford to spend.

He said: "Every year, a budget that increases the council tax to the people of Kent but reduces the services delivered - that is unfair.

"It is a budget for the few, not the many because there are initiatives like the Sevenoaks grammar school which KCC has thrown money at, despite it not being necessary.

"The council has spent money hand over fist, and with no result.

"None of the Labour group on the council voted for this budget, and that is because it is unfair. It looks to pay for projects like this school, in the affluent west of the county when frontline services are being cut back.

"In my district in Aylesham, there used to be a youth centre. A place where the kids could go, and hang out off the streets. That is the kind of service getting cut, while grammar schools get funding. There isn't a need, but it sums the budget up. It's one for the rich few, while the many see their services cut."

Sevenoaks is hoping for the green light to a grammar 'annexe' of the girls' only Weald of Kent Grammar in Tonbridge.

But Tory chiefs insist they had their hands tied by Whitehall, describing the budget as "its most challenging yet".

John Simmonds, the Conservative member responsible for finance, said central Government had reduced the grant for the council by a total of £55.5m this year, bringing the total that the council had cut from its budget in the past five years to almost half a billion pounds.

Cllr Simmonds said the rise in council tax could be justified by the fact that 75 per cent of respondents to the council's budget consultation had said they would agree with a rise in council tax.

Cllr Simmonds said: "The opinions of the people of Kent really do matter to us.

"Our spending shows we have listened carefully to the public and taken into account what services they value the most.

"We learned that looking after the elderly and vulnerable and children of the county is a top priority for the public and we have therefore not only protected the services we offer this group but invested more money so additional resources can be provided where they are needed.

"There is no doubt this is the most difficult and challenging budget that KCC has ever faced.

"Balancing the books has been tougher than ever before but we have made savings where we can, while protecting frontline services, so that we can put additional resources where they are most needed."

He said children and adult social care would see a major thrust to drive efficiency, with investment in preventative and support services.

Cllr Simmonds added: "While these are tough times for everyone, I am confident that the Kent economy is beginning to see signs of recovery.

"But there is a long way to go if we are to cope with so many years of reduced government funding and increased demand on our services.

"We have to continue to innovate the way we run the council and transform the way public services are delivered."

After six long hours of debate, the budget was finally agreed. Some 48 voted for the budget with 29 against.

Bringing the meeting to an end Paul Carter said "I think we have all had enough".

It will, no doubt, be a sentiment shared by those in the county faced with yet more cuts to services.

SLOWDOWN: It is feared the move could ultimately result in the much-needed housebuilding boom needed to kick-start the economy stalling once again

PM's benefits cap 'a tax on south east' claims housing association

A leading housing organisation says that if a Tory promise to reduce benefits if they win the election becomes a reality, many families in the county will be forced out. **Jamie Weir** examines the argument

ONE of the county's biggest social housing providers has branded plans to reduce the benefit cap to just £23,000 a year a 'tax on the south east', saying that thousands of families could be forced out of their homes.

It follows the recent announcement by Prime Minister David Cameron who made it an election pledge to slash the maximum amount of benefits from £26,000 to £23,000.

He insists that by making the move, it would save taxpayers £135m a year.

The PM insists this should create "a stampede to the JobCentre".

But Moat Housing, which has its central office in Dartford, says it is concerned over the impact of any such decision implemented by a future Tory government on struggling families.

The affordable housing provider had already investigated the potential impact of the previous benefits cap in 2013, stating then it could have serious impacts on people's ability to afford their homes.

With a new cap proposal on the table, Moat Housing says if it's tightened further, it is likely to have dire consequences for people who rely on housing benefit to help pay their rent.

"Rent is likely to become almost instantly unaffordable for many people if the benefit cap is set at that level," explains Angelo Sommariva, public affairs and policy manager at Moat Housing.

"That is likely to cause other, knock on impacts on those people, and also the wider economy."

The benefits cap was first introduced in April 15, 2013. It effectively limits the amount of benefits a person, aged between 16 and 64, is able to get, creating a 'cap' of £26,000.

In its present form it has been one of the Government's most popular policies, with polling company Ipsos Mori finding that 73 per cent of people support the cap in principle. Now, Mr Cameron says the cap should be lowered to £23,000.

But that could force many in Kent to struggle given the soaring cost of rented accommodation.

Under the proposed cap, Moat Housing says that all of its three-bedroom properties would instantly become unaffordable for its residents.

Explained Mr Sommariva: "There is the possibility that people will end up in a spiral of debt if they are unable to pay for housing.

"They could get desperate, and be forced into using expensive ways to pay rent like credit cards or payday loans which are likely to provide an immediate solution, but could end up causing longer term problems.

"Once people are struggling like that, we normally see a serious increase in arrears."

Mr Sommariva says that if people don not take out expensive credit, they may be forced to cut back on living costs.

He said: "People may end up being forced to dipping in to their living costs, with the result that they aren't able to afford things like food or heating for their house."

That isn't good for anyone, as it has a constant domino-like effect on other parts of the economy. A recent report into the potential impact of reducing benefits on affordable home provision showed that new house building was unlikely to take place as a consequence.

He said: "If people simply can't afford a three-bedroom property, then we, and other housing providers can't build them. Fewer houses end up getting built and the supply begins to dwindle across Kent."

There would be other potential impacts on areas as well, with the gentrification of parts of the country being likely as poorer people were 'pushed out' of more expensive areas, says Moat Housing.

"There's a chance that people end up simply being transferred to areas with lower land values. It's a tax on the south east," said Mr Sommariva.

He said: "The problem is, it's not dealing with poverty, but just pushing it around."

Perhaps unsurprisingly, leading Tory figures in the county support the pledge.

Helen Grant, MP for Maidstone and the Weald, denied Moat Housing's claim.

She insists the cap won't have as great an effect as it fears, and since the introduction of the benefit cap, those claiming welfare have changed their habits.

She said: "We urgently need to restore fairness to the welfare state. The benefit cap provides clear incentives for people to get into employment and will give taxpayers the assurance that the high claims of the past are no longer possible.

"By guaranteeing that individuals will always be better off in work and putting an end to runaway benefit claims, the cap is having a real impact in changing attitudes and behaviours.

FEARS: Angelo Sommariva

"I understand since the cap was introduced, many households have made the choice to move into work or stop claiming housing benefit."

However, a report released earlier this week by Crisis – a homelessness charity – disagrees, with its chief executive placing the blame for a rise in homelessness on benefits cuts by the current government.

Jon Sparkes, chief executive of Crisis, explained: "This report reveals the true scale of homelessness in England, which headline figures no longer reflect.

"Council officials are clear that benefit cuts and sanctions are taking a dreadful toll on people's lives, with rising numbers facing the loss of their home at a time when councils are being forced to cut services. This is a desperate state of affairs.

"What this report clearly shows is that political choices have a huge impact on homelessness. We want to see manifestos that commit to tackling the woeful lack of affordable housing, reviewing sanctions and cuts to housing benefit and to funding and supporting local homelessness services."

Those warnings are unlikely to be heeded by the prime minister, who also announced that if a Tory government were elected, he would dispense with housing benefits for those aged between 18 and 21-years-old.

That policy would also adversely affect many says housing charity Shelter.

Campbell Robb, the chief executive of the charity, said: "We need a welfare system that's fair, but taking away the safety net that stands between some young people and homelessness would be a disaster.

"Some young people simply don't have the option of living with their parents - like those escaping an abusive household or thrown out because of their sexuality.

"For the small number of young people who need help while they find work or get back on their feet, this part of the safety net is often the only thing that stands between them and the streets."

The prime minister said that the new cap he is proposing - which will save taxpayers £135 million a year – will be used alongside the savings from cutting young adults housing benefits, to help pay for three million new apprenticeships by 2020.

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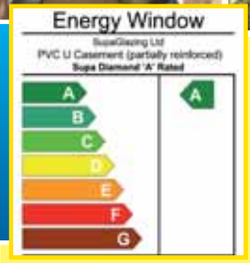

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ONIONS: Tonnes of food is wasted each and every year

Could gleaning help solve food waste dilemma?

It has celebrity support and a growing number of farmers signing up. **Jamie Weir** looks at how the gleaning community is making a difference

EVERY time a farmer takes in his harvest there is, inevitably, over matter which is never collected in.

Perhaps spuds missed by the machines, or onions that didn't quite make the grade.

And it is increasing every year as supermarkets insist on only the most aesthetically pleasing produce, leaving farmers with perfectly tasty but unwanted vegetables.

But rather than be gathered in, it is left to rot in the fields and simply ploughed back in ahead of the planting of the next crop.

Quantities are not insignificant either.

Tonnes and tonnes of perfectly usable crops are lost this way each and every year. That is, until now.

Because there is a food revolution taking place, supported by some high-profile backers, And it is called 'gleaning' .

It is certainly nothing new.

There are mentions in the Bible of people being allowed to collect remains of the harvest once it had been gathered in... but with so much focus on food wastage and rising costs, it is once again becoming popular.

The idea is very simple. Seek permission from a farmer, and then, at a pre-arranged time, head on to the fields and retrieve the veg.

Among its high profile supporters are celebrity chef Jamie Oliver and farmer and TV star Jimmy Doherty.

The duo featured the practice on a recent episode of their popular Channel 4 show Jimmy

and Jamie's Friday Night Feast.

Mr Oliver said: "Gleaning's a win, win. The farmer gets his fields cleared and the locals get free veg. But there's an even more significant outcome. Gleaning can help get good food to those who need it."

Food poverty has become one of the primary reasons for gleaning's rise in popularity; how better to help feed those in, or close to, poverty than with produce which would otherwise be ploughed back into the ground and which is packed with key nutrients and health benefits.

The major gleaning group in Kent is part of the environmental charity Feedback, which campaigns against the problem of hunger.

Its volunteer co-ordinator is Rachel Ledwith, who started gleaning in 2014.

She told KoS the work carried out so far has saved tonnes of food and delivered it straight to those most in need.

She said: "Over the past year in Kent we've gleaned approximately 31 tonnes of produce, up from 10 tonnes the previous year and donated it to re-distribution charities.

"That equates to 512,500 portions of fruit and veg, across 25 gleaning days and using 159 volunteers in Kent alone. UK-wide, we've gleaned 110 tonnes since we began in 2012."

She says it is on the rise too. It has recruited more volunteers and is now looking for more farms who are willing to allow its teams on their land.

That, of course, is a key aspect of the practice. You need a willing farmer and his permission and it is that co-operation which is so important.

The farmer benefits, the volunteers benefit, the charities benefit, and those unable to afford to feed their family with healthy food get fresh fruit and veg.

> **"We aren't a third world country, but so many are living hand to mouth here. It's great to know the food we collect will go to people who face hunger."**
>
> **Rachel Ledwith,**
> Co-ordinator, Feedback

Adds Mrs Ledwith: "We've now got around 300 volunteers who want to come out and help us harvest food, and we also have a total of 28 farms.

"But we'd really like to have more, so that we get more opportunities to reduce food waste and help people in food poverty."

Those two strands are the important factor according to Mrs Ledwith.

She said: "The great thing about using gleaning is that it works to not only help highlight, and solve the problem of food waste, but it also brings the issue of food poverty to the forefront.

"I was shocked when I learned how many people are going hungry in the UK. We aren't a third world country, but so many people are living literally hand to mouth here. It's great to know that the food we collect will go to helping people who face hunger."

FRUIT: Farmers must provide permission to allow people to come onto their land and collect for food banks

All of the food harvested by the volunteer gleaners is from crops either rejected by the major supermarket buyers, or that is at the end of the season and won't be collected by the farmer for sale.

Because of this, the charity has to work in collaboration with the farmer, who needs to invite them onto their land to collect the food when it's likely to go to waste.

One of the farmers who has worked with them in the past is Geoff Philpott, from Elmwood Farm in Broadstairs.

He said: "It was a great pleasure to have the volunteers on the farm and great to see them enjoying themselves.

"It's a bonus for us to have the opportunity to show people what we do and how we do things on the farm."

Gleaning, says Mr Philpott is an excellent idea.

He said: "It was good to see our products go to good use rather than the crops getting ploughed back into the ground.

"The idea of gleaning fresh vegetables that do not meet today's 'high appearance' criteria, but that are still very good, is a fantastic idea that helps a lot of less fortunate people."

The gleaners also have to work in partnership with groups that can distribute the food – they are normally food banks.

In Kent, Mrs Ledwith says that they work alongside three main foodbanks who are able to give the food to those in most need.

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THE SCALE OF OUR FOOD WASTE PROBLEM

ACROSS the UK, the scale of food waste is increasing at an alarming rate as these figures demonstrate

■ Almost six million people live in poverty in the UK, and this figure is on the rise according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

■ Around two million of these are children.

■ The charity FareShare provides over 8.6 million meals each year across the country for 36,500 people each day.

So how do we solve the problem?

■ Approximately 60 per cent of UK food waste is believed to occur in the supply chain and before food gets to your fridge – gleaning helps to reduce this.

■ Cosmetic standards have been responsible for a tremendous amount of wasted food. In other words, supermarkets only accept good looking, classic shaped, fruit and vegetables. This was illustrated in the summer of 2012, when extreme weather conditions led supermarkets to temporarily relax their standards following pressure from the National Farmers' Union. This saved an estimated 300,000 tonnes of produce from the bin.

■ Most people don't care whether the food they eat is beautiful, or conforms to standards set by supermarkets according to a poll by the Institute of Mechanical Engineers. It revealed that 45 per cent of people say the appearance of fruit and vegetables 'doesn't matter', while 26 per cent say they'd buy the cheapest regardless of what it looked like and 10 per cent say they would actively seek out imperfect looking produce.

■ The Gleaning Network says food waste might also contribute to climate change in the UK. The group says that if everyone wasted approximately 25 per cent of their food, it could mean that 10 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions would come from producing, transporting, storing and preparing

She said: "We've managed to establish a relationship with a group of charities who work as food banks.

"It's great that we have managed to build these relationships, as they can get the food directly to those most in need."

One of the organisations which has benefitted in Kent is FareShare.

It's a charity which takes delivery of donations of food before distributing it to other smaller charities and local community groups for them to use.

A spokesman for the charity's Kent wing, which has recently opened a new depot just outside Ashford, told KoS that gleaning was helping in the fight against hunger.

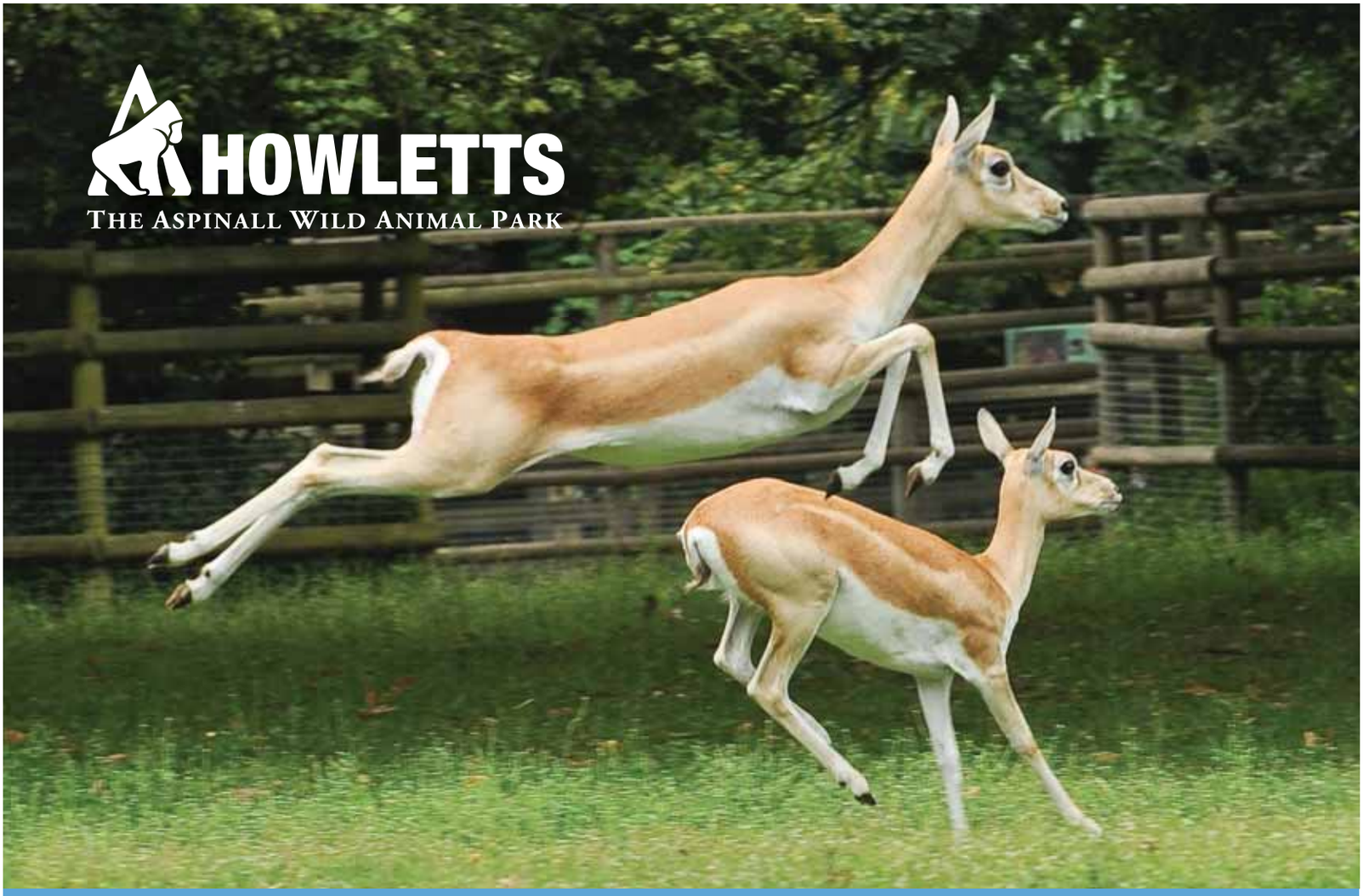
She said: "We have received packages from the gleaning network, and always enjoy working with them.

"It's great, as it adds to the food we're able to distribute which is brilliant when there's so much need.

"It's still fairly small scale at the moment, but we're hoping it grows in popularity as it's terrible to think of good food going to waste when there are a growing number of people who need it."

■ **What do you think? Share your views. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Or email us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**

PICKING: Taking in the crops left over from the main harvest



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MEDWAY MARITIME HOSPITAL: Once upon a time, long, long ago, Medway NHS Foundation Trust was not in special measures

The hospital still in intensive care

While the pressure on the NHS is nothing new, the problems at one of the county's top hospitals are way beyond that elsewhere. So what's gone wrong? **Sarah Linney** pays a visit to the Medway Maritime

ONCE upon a time, long, long ago, Medway NHS Foundation Trust was not in special measures.

The 500-bed Medway Maritime Hospital, which it manages, has now been classed as underperforming for more than 18 months.

Since the first damning report, in July 2013, triggered amid concerns about high mortality rates, the hospital has continued to generate headlines for all the wrong reasons.

Just earlier this week, it was confirmed those death rates were still of concern, while successive inspections have found little or no improvement.

The claims have come thick and fast. There were reports of rats. Blood-spattered walls. A patient who waited more than 30 hours to be seen in A&E. The Daily Telegraph ran a story asking if Medway was the country's worst hospital.

In short, the hospital, and the trust which runs it, has been plunged into something of a crisis.

But then when your catchment area extends to some 400,000 people, those concerns are always going to be significant.

It would be easy to simply repeat the NHS mantra of insufficient funding. But the reality is that the issues here run deeper and are far more complex.

Unsurprisingly, the management of the hospital has undergone a major re-organisation amid obvious concerns.

Although even that managed to bring further bad publicity.

With the board of directors replaced, chairman Denise Harker and chief executive Mark Devlin both announced their decision to quit a little over a year ago.

Monitor, the health trust regulator, drafted in two interim replacements.

Christopher Langley came in as interim chairman and within days it emerged he was getting paid £200,000 for work which may take a mere one or two days a week.

An interim CEO, Nigel Beverley, earned the equivalent of £1,740 a day. Nice work if you can get it.

Across the board, the trust were employing some 30 managers on six-figure salaries.

For many, it was an example of the failings of a sprawling, top-heavy, NHS management structure in need of reform.

There may, however, finally be some light at the end of a long tunnel.

Permanent chairman Shena Winning was drafted in last September, while Phil Barnes was appointed acting CEO in June. He remains in the role while they continue to seek a permanent replacement.

It prompted the trust's managing director, Stephen Hay, to publicly admit he was "disappointed with the way the trust as been managed by its previous leaders" but that now the "right people" were in place.

It has provided some stability, but everyone involved admits there is still a long way to go.

"We plan to emerge out of special measures by April 2016," admits the trust's new chief operating officer, Morag Jackson.

"There were some pretty fundamental issues here that we have had to address."

So just what has been going wrong?

"There are a number of reasons why trusts struggle," said Mrs Jackson, who previously worked at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust.

"Leadership is key to any successful organisation, in health and outside health. And clinical engagement is important – making sure the clinical staff have a voice within the organisation and that they are seen within leadership roles.

"And they need the right training and development for that. You can't just take a nurse and assume he or she will be a good manager.

"Money's tight, and funding is an issue, but it is not the only issue. It's difficult to know the precise reasons, but it's about creating the right culture."

She is, however, optimistic that the new board will finally be able to turn the hospital around.

"Small changes have been made and we have a long way to go but the board is absolutely determined that patients will get the care they deserve," Mrs Jacskon said.

"We have areas already where that's happening, but we need to make sure it's consistently provided.

"Standards are for patients. They have a right to quality healthcare. If we lose sight of that, then that's terrible for the NHS – an institution that we all feel rightfully proud of."

Of course, it has little choice other than to get better.

Touring the facility, you get little sense of the concerns that hang like a dark cloud above the Gillingham hospital.

There is the normal hustle and bustle, staff and patients scurrying to and from patients and appointments.

One of the major problem areas has been A&E, which was the worst in the country according to figures released last October. Inspectors described it as being "in crisis".

The hospital has now been given £13 million to upgrade the department – but the redevelopment, set to start in March and last until the end of next year, will bring with it its own challenges.

"There will be a better environment, with greater privacy and dignity - it will make a big, big difference for patients, staff and families," Mrs Jackson said.

"But we will have to continue to run the emergency department while we are building a new one around it.

"Planning is crucial – we can move stuff round within the department, but the main challenge will be redoing majors (acute care) and resuscitation."

One new development has been the introduction of a children's emergency department, staffed at the moment from 7am to 11pm. The hospital intends to make it 24 hours.

"One of the issues we have with the emergency department is that it is too small, and children and adults were being seen in the same areas," Mrs Jackson said.

"A department which has been specially designed for children is much better for them and gives parents a much greater sense of confidence. Environment has a big impact on the way people view their treatment and respond to it.

"There's evidence that if you put people in a good environment you can reduce the amount of painkillers they receive."

The tired waiting area is to be refurbished – as is, elsewhere, the drab outpatients facility.

However, staffing remains a big problem. Four or five new A&E consultants have been recruited, bringing the hospital into line with Royal College guidance, as well as four matrons, including one with specialist paediatric training.

But recruiting nurses is proving so difficult the hospital is planning to employ paramedics in A&E alongside nursing staff.

"It's difficult to recruit emergency department staff as the pressures are pretty relentless," Mrs Jackson said.

"We are continuing to recruit nurses for the emergency department, but everyone around the country is looking to do the same. So we are employing paramedics as they have enhanced skills in treating emergency patients.

"Of course a nurse is better – they are an all-rounder. I wouldn't suggest

Continued from page 19

that we use paramedics on a care of the elderly ward."

The difficulty in recruiting nurses affects not just the emergency department but the whole hospital.

"There is a shortage of nurses across the board. A lack of suitably qualified nurses across some of our wards is the single biggest issue we face," Mrs Jackson said.

"We have appointed a new director of workforce, who has already started working on a new recruitment and retention strategy. We have had recruitment campaigns but we also need to look at retention, training and development, as we have had a high turnover of staff."

Just as important, she says, are the non-clinical staff.

Mrs Jackson explains: "Some departments have a high turnover of admin staff and we need to look at the reasons for that. We need to have the right balance – we can't have clinical staff having to carry out admin jobs when they should be focusing on patients.

"And we have patients who say no-one ever answers the phone. That has a big impact on a patient – we need to make sure we have enough staff for patients to be able to access the hospital easily."

The increased strain on the NHS is often blamed on the ageing population, rather than underfunding, poor management and disorganisation.

But Mrs Jackson says that it is vital the NHS – and social care departments – rise to the challenge of how to best take care of these patients.

"There is an increase in complex elderly patients coming in," she said.

"Medicine has become more sophisticated and we can treat more conditions, and keep people alive for longer, but that person is still in a 95-year-old body. People survive things they would have died from in the past, but the natural ageing process still occurs.

"We must never lose compassion. You sometimes read in papers that it's all about the elderly population, as if they are becoming a burden to us. That should never be the case. We need to make sure we have compassionate services to care for them."

She says everyone benefits if patients can be kept in their own homes as much as possible.

"There's no question that if you can keep people in their own environment, with the right support, their quality of life is better than if they end up being admitted to hospital," Mrs Jackson said.

"We need to look at how we keep patients in their own homes for longer, and how we keep patients with dementia at home. Families need to be supported.

"But that relies on all the agencies working together, and we are doing some work on that as there's a lot more we can do.

"There is no one authority responsible for the whole pathway of care – we have GPs, hospitals, community hospitals and social care, and the latter is the responsibility of the local authority, which has been hit with cuts.

"It would be better if it was all one organisation."

Other work includes a review of the outpatients appointments system to make sure patients are not waiting too long for an appointment, and to see how cancellations, both on the hospital's side and on the patients', can be reduced.

"We are still not discharging as many patients as we could, and some of the problems are a result of us not being able to move patients through the hospital," Mrs Jackson said.

"That's about more joined-up working with social services and community care, and making sure that at every step we are doing things are quickly as we can."

Unbelievably, some nurses were also not washing their hands between patients.

"We are continually telling people and re-educating them. All wards have hand hygiene audits," Mrs Jackson said.

It's important to remember, of course, that negative reports can paint a distorted picture. Most patients who come to a hospital in special measures will still receive good care. The default situation is still that you will be better when you come out than when you went in.

But there are genuine concerns. Problems which appear to be unique to the Medway Maritime. And that is an issue the hospital needs to ensure is addressed and resolved. For the good of the county's health.

UNDER FIRE: The A&E has been an area of particular concern

Historic find of the £10m Magna Carta

When an historian opened an old scrap book at the archives centre in Maidstone, he could never imagine he would uncover one of the earliest copies of the Magna Carta, worth a staggering £10m. **Molly Kersey** reports on the full remarkable story

DISCOVERY: Dr Mark Bateson with the copy of the Magna Carta

WHEN Dr Mark Bateson got a request from an academic asking him to verify a historical charter, he didn't think much of it.

After all, as the Kent County Council community history officer, he was used to dealing with such queries.

Assuming it would be a normal day, he started looking through the archives of the glass-fronted Kent History and Library Centre - an impressive, modern building at the half way point between the River Medway and the local authority's County Hall headquarters in Maidstone town centre.

But as he searched a scrapbook on the hunt for the charter he came across a document whose historic significance would most likely exceed all other items stored on the site.

Because nestled in the pages was an original copy of a keystone in British history... the Magna Carta.

It was a remarkable discovery, not least as it was found in a year which is celebrating the 800 anniversary of the original document being sealed at Runnymeade by King John in 1215.

Believed to be created in 1300 by King Edward I, it was issued to the borough of Sandwich, one of the Cinque Ports; five ports around the south east maintained for their trade and defensive positions.

And while it may not have survived in pristine condition, it's historical clout would equate to a price tag of an estimated £10 million.

The discovery, made last December but only publicised this week, brings the total number of surviving originals of the 1300 edition to just seven.

In total, there are just 24 existing copies of the document in existence.

"I just couldn't believe it," Dr Bateson told KoS, in the week his discovery made headlines around the world.

"I had an email from a professor of medieval history, Nicholas Vincent, who I already knew.

"He explained he was on a project which had got a lot of money behind it to investigate the Magna Carta for this anniversary year.

"He was asking me if I could verify a reference in our online catalogue to the Charter of the Forest.

"Obviously I was really excited to get involved and do it.

"So in tracing the original Charter of the Forest, it turns out to be in a scrap book. So I go to the right page and it's very scrappy.

"This Charter of the Forest is there and I was able to confirm that when I started looking in the rest of the volume. It's got a lot of medieval charters and deeds and documents and the Magna Carta was right next to the charter.

Turn to page 22

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DAMAGED: But despite the decay this is worth a staggering £10m

SO JUST WHAT IS THE MAGNA CARTA?

THE Magna Carta – or 'great charter' as its name means when translated from Latin – is a document which, for the first time, enshrined in law that no man, not even a king, was above the law.

Its most famous principle is summarised in chapter 39 of the document. It reads: ''No free man shall be taken or imprisoned, or dispossessed or outlawed or exiled or in any way ruined, nor will we go or send against him except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land.''

The document needs to be placed in its historical context for it to be understood properly. At the time, the King of England, King John, was very unpopular with a number of the country's barons. King John ruled using a system of vis et voluntas, or ''force and will''.

He frequently took executive decisions which were justified on the basis that he was king, and was therefore above the law. His abuses of this power had alienated him from some of the barons in his kingdom, and led to dissatisfaction.

These barons took an oath that they would 'stand fast for the liberty of the church and the realm' and fight against John unless he confirmed a so-called 'charter of liberties'. The rebellious barons congregated in Northampton before marching on London, Lincoln and Exeter.

Once the rebels held London, John realised that he may not be able to quell the trouble and asked Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury – who had been working with the rebels to come up with their demands – at the time, to organise peace talks.

The king met the rebels at Runnymede on June 10, 1215, and the rebels presented him with their demands. The king sealed the document days later, after Stephen Langton helped mediate the peace process. The Magna Carta was the end result.

News of the principles established in the Magna Carta spread through the populace with 13 copies quickly produced and sent throughout the kingdom.

The charter's popularity among the general public had already been enshrined, and would pave the way for subsequent charters which would build on the core principle of freedom, and the monarch having to live under the same laws of the land.

Continued from page 21

"I could tell it was something special."

And it was the fact the two documents were together which greatly increases its value.

"I knew about the Magna Carta," adds Dr Bateson. "I have a doctorate in medieval history of the late 13th century which this Magna Carta was from, which is my period. I was used to reading that hand writing from my research."

It had been damaged by damp and it was missing around a third of its text and its royal seal, but still holds an incredible value.

He quickly passed the amazing news on to Professor Vincent from the University of East Anglia.

"I got back to him and said 'it's a Charter of the Forest but did you realise there's this Magna Carta there right next to it.'

"He emailed back in capital letters! I was thinking, I had better get this right, I don't want to raise people's hopes."

After making some vital checks, the professor was able to authenticate the fascinating discovery.

Professor Vincent explained: "It is a fantastic discovery which comes in the week that the four other known versions were brought together at the Houses of Parliament.

"It is a fantastic piece of news for Sandwich, which puts it in a small category of towns and institutions that own a 1300 issue."

So how did such an incredibly important historical document remain lost for decades?

Because, Dr Bateson explained, nobody was looking for it.

"It's on our catalogue. It was there if someone was searching for Magna Carta, but I suppose why would they? This is how research works," he explained.

"People don't randomly think 'I am interested in the Magna Carta so I'll look for this'.

"But you find things when you look for them, which is a truism of life."

The document is the first Magna Carta to be discovered since 2007, when Sotheby's produced a catalogue listing all known 23 original Magna Cartas issued from 1215 on-

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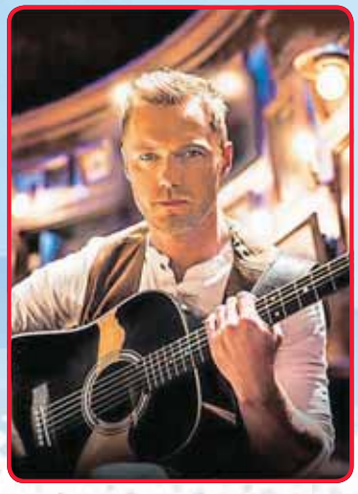

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wards. This makes the Sandwich charter the 24th known, and the second surviving for a Cinque Port, the other – again from 1300 – being in Faversham.

The freshly-found document is being carefully preserved at the Kent History and Library Centre, on deposit from Sandwich Town Council, the legal owners.

The discovery has important implications for what historians know of the publication and distribution of Magna Carta – and hopes there may be others out there yet to be found.

"For medieval historians it's an incredible find," said Dr Bateson.

"They now think because of this discovery that it's quite likely the Magna Carta was given to all the Cinque Ports so there could be a lot more that haven't survived or are still waiting to be found.

"It's opened the door to the possibility of other discoveries."

It is believed that Sandwich Town Council are not planning on selling the document, worth some £10m, but will instead keep it as a tourist attraction.

The Mayor of Sandwich Paul Graeme said: "On behalf of Sandwich Town Council, I would like to say we are absolutely delighted to discover that an original Magna Carta and original Charter of the Forest, previously unknown, are in our ownership.

"To own one of these documents, let alone both, is an immense privilege given their international importance.

"Through the American Declaration of Independence, continuing in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Magna Carta still underpins individual liberties worldwide.

"To own such a document – and the Charter of the Forest – is an honour and a great responsibility."

Mike Hill, KCC cabinet member for community services, said: "This is most exciting news. Our history and library centre is a treasure house of records relating to the history of Kent.

"We welcome visitors from all walks of life and all stages of life, from children and others delving into the history of their family or community, to academics researching aspects of Kent's rich past.

"As in this case, they can all help us discover and re-discover the amazing stories waiting to be unearthed here."

VENUE: Document was found at the Kent History and Library Centre in Maidstone.

MAGNA CARTA'S TIMELESS APPEAL

THE nation's continued fascination with the Magna Carta was demonstrated earlier this month when, for just three days, the four original surviving Magna Carta manuscripts were brought together in one place, for the first time.

Staged at the British Library, it united copies held within its own archives, along with those from Lincoln Cathedral and Salisbury Cathedral.

Given their fragile nature, it was agreed just 1,215 members of the public – to mark the 800th anniversary of when the manuscripts were original dispatched after they were sealed at Runnymeade in late June and early July 1215 - would be provided access to the documents.

Nearly 44,000 people applied from more than 20 countries, with the winners drawn by ballot.

After a whistlestop tour of the House of Lords, the documents were again separated to take part in major exhibitions.

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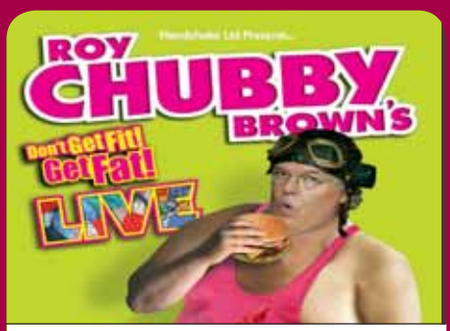

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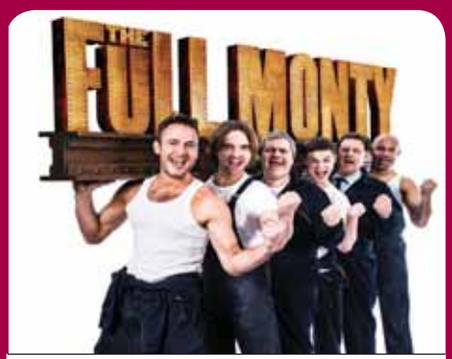

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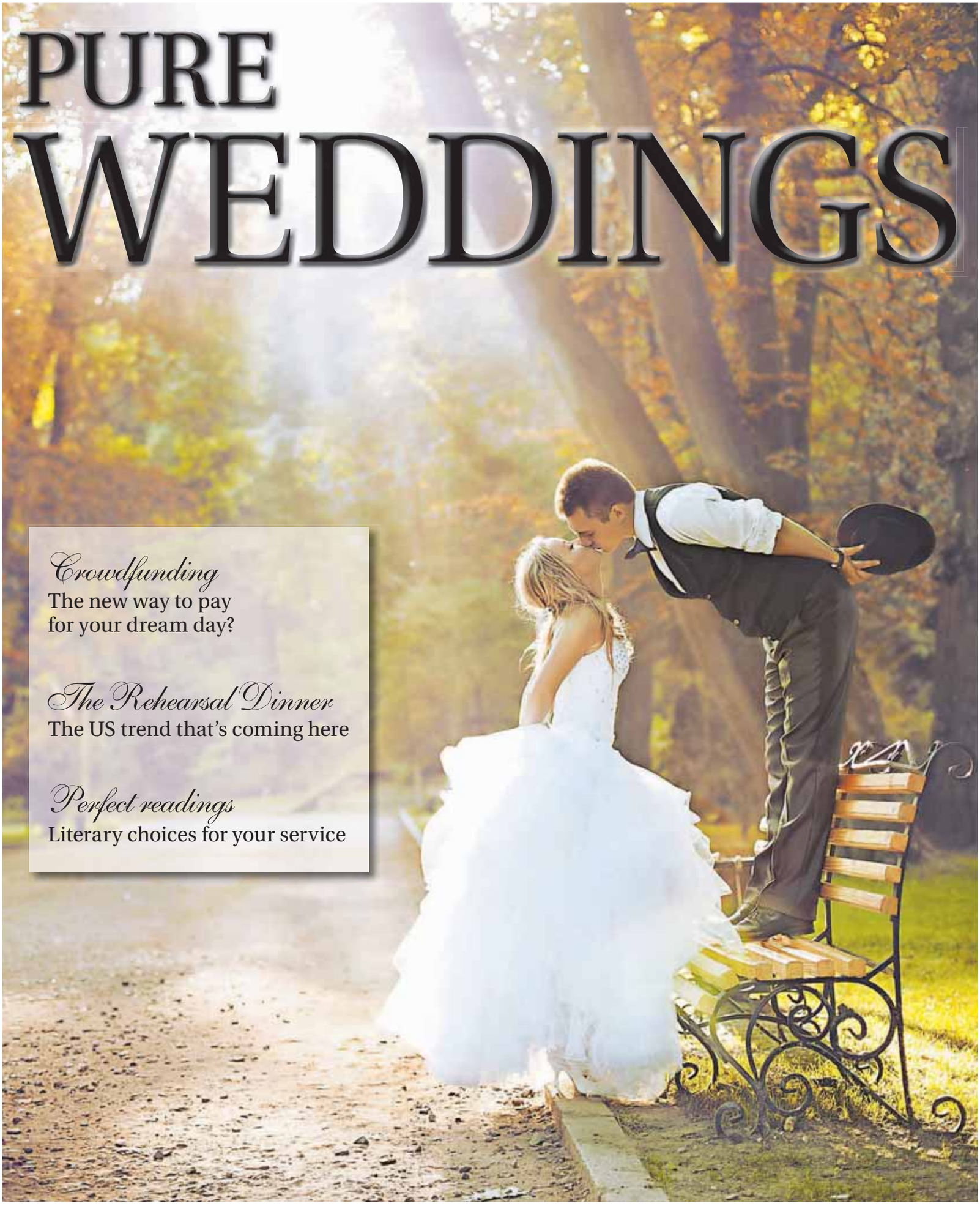

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Welcome to this edition of Pure Weddings - and congratulations to anyone who is planning their big day.

Inside, we tackle some of the new issues facing engaged couples, including looking at whether crowd-funding is going to become the most popular way to pay for the big event.

We also look at perennial bridal favourites - like dress trends and romantic readings for your perfect service.

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Kent's wedding fayre index

ON FEBRUARY 22, The Grand in Folkestone will be holding its first wedding fayre of the year.

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For further information relating to the day please contact, The Grand on 01303 222222 or via their website at www.grand-uk.com

February 15: Oakwood House 01245895470.
February 22: Hempsted House, Sittingbourne 01795 428020; Marine Hotel, Whitstable 07834 907700; Hotel du Vin & Bistro, Tunbridge Wells; Eastwell Manor, Ashford; The Kent Wedding Fair, Grange Moor Hotel, 01622 763226.
February 28: Mecure Maidstone Wedding Showcase evening, 0844 815 9045; The Sands Hotel, Margate, 01843 228228.
March 1: The Spa Hotel, Mount Ephriam, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 520331; West Heath, Sevenoaks, 01732 468993; Turner Gallery, Margate, 07834907700; Bluebirds, Dover, 01304 226586; The Kings Hall, Herne Bay, 01227 374188; Priestfield's , Gillingham, 01622 763226; Westenhanger Castle, 01634 578695 or 07886 901081.
March 8: Bridgewell Hotel Wedding Fayre, Chatham, 07834 907700.
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April 12: Orchard Suite Wedding Fayre, Maidstone, 07834 907700; The Bell Hotel Wedding Fair, The Quay, Sandwich, 07834 907700.
April 19: Kent County Cricket Club, Canterbury, 07834 907700; Rochester Corn Exchange, Rochester, 01622 763226; The Orangery at Turkey Mill, Maidstone, 01622 919919.
May 3: Hayne Barn House, Hythe, 01303 262 555; Inn on the Lake, Gravesend, 01622 763226.
May 10: The Royal Hotel Wedding Fair, Deal, 07834 907700; Sprivers Mansion Wedding Fair, Tonbridge, 01622 763226.

Your essential guide to the history of engagement rings

Everything you wanted to know...

ONE OF the first things any bride-to-be will be asked about is her engagement ring.

While some men like to buy the ring pre-proposal, some couples will choose it together, many deciding to split the cost.

It has become standard for the bride-to-be to permanently wear her ring as a means of showing her commitment. But what is the history of the ring – when did the tradition start, and why?

Although the ancient Egyptians are sometimes credited with having invented the engagement ring with the ancient Greeks then adopting it, its history can only be reliably traced as far back as ancient Rome.

In the UK, as in many other countries, engagement rings are placed on the finger nearest the little finger on the left hand. This is because it was believed that this finger contained a vein (the vena amoris) that led to the heart.

In the second century BC, the Roman bride-to-be was given two rings, a gold one which she wore in public, and one made of iron which she wore at home while attending to household duties.

At one time Roman citizens wore rings made of iron. In later years, senators who served as ambassadors were given gold seal rings for official use when abroad. Later the privilege of wearing gold rings was extended to other public officials, then to the knights, later to all freeborn, and eventually, to freedmen. For several centuries it was the custom for Romans to wear iron rings at home, gold rings in public. During this period a girl or woman might receive two engagement rings, one of iron and one of gold.

During the middle ages, the mid-7th century Visigothic Code cemented the intention behind the engagement ring, saying: "that when the ceremony of betrothal has been performed and the ring shall have been given or accepted as a pledge, although nothing may have been committed to writing, the promise shall, under no circumstances, be broken."

The first well-documented use of a diamond ring to signify engagement was in 1477, by the Archduke Maximilian of Austria when he became betrothed to Mary of Burgundy. This kick-started a trend among the upper-classes to give the clear stones.

The popularity of diamonds continued to spread, although World War One saw a decline. It was actually a marketing campaign by De Beers in 1938 that saw the diamond ring become more popular again. In 1947, the slogan "a diamond is forever" was introduced - and customers were persuaded that an engagement ring is indispensable, and that a diamond is the only acceptable stone for an engagement ring. In 1939, only 10 per cent of engagement rings had diamonds. By 1990, 80 per cent did.

Now, partly in thanks to Kate Middleton, coloured stones are making a comeback, with jewellers seeing an increase in the numbers of rubies, sapphires and emeralds purchased, as well as semi-precious stones like onyx.

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Couples are looking to crowdfunding to pay for their big day...

IT'S NOT news that weddings are expensive.

With rings, catering, drinks, entertainment, ceremony and the all-important dress to pay for, costs mount up quickly, with average weddings costing in excess of £20,000 nowadays.

With many bucking the tradition of the bride's parents paying for everything, it is up to couples to try and save enough money themselves, which is difficult in these times of economic recession with falling, or stagnant, incomes and the basic cost of living continuing to creep up.

Over recent years, it has become more popular for couples to set up honeymoon funds rather than register for gifts, as many people have what they need having previously lived together.

But now a new trend is springing up – the crowdfunded wedding.

Fenella Smith, from Tunbridge Wells, is getting married later this year. "My fiance Jack and I started saving in the conventional way for our nuptials," she explains.

"But it was very, very slow going. You get to a point where you simply can't fillet any more spending from your budget. We were faced with considering an uber-small wedding, which can be lovely, and is the right choice for some people, but wouldn't be right for us.

"We both have large families, and we wanted to be able to invite all of them."

So the pair decided to look at alternative funding schemes. Jack says: "I knew people used crowd-funding to make short films and that kind of thing. I had seen a friend of mine raise a few thousand for a charity trip abroad, so we decided to give it a go."

Fenella adds: "We are still putting our savings towards it, and continuing to save. It will be much less expensive than the average wedding, but much bigger than we could afford alone."

Within two weeks of posting their crowdfunding page, the couple had raised around £3,000 – nearly one third of their £10,000 target.

A couple of months later, and they got to their goal, ahead of schedule.

Fenella says: "I now feel that we will be able to organise the wedding that our guests deserve.

"And of course, we won't be asking for any wedding presents, as they already gave us a present in the form of the wedding itself, rather than a toaster, or something else we don't need."

Not everyone is in favour of the new trend though, with some etiquette experts labelling it 'unacceptable'.

Wedding planner Jade Winters says: "Being asked to pay for a wedding you are invited to is rather crass - especially if the celebration is large and over the top.

"I think it would be far more tasteful to have a smaller celebration, or to plan further ahead.

"Having said this, if this means the couple save themselves from getting into debt, it may be no bad thing.

"But from a etiquette point of view, it is not a particularly savoury thing, and I think that many people – and particularly the older generation, would be shocked to be asked for money.

"You also run the risk of people not attending if they can't afford to contribute.

"On top of which, getting to a wedding, staying overnight if needs be, and getting an outfit is already a very costly venture – so I'm not sure if this trend will really take off."

It remains to be seen what happens next, but as crowdfunding in general gets more popular, this trend could really take off.

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Style tips for mothers of the happy couple

It's not just about the bride...

IT'S NOT only the bride who has to worry about her outfit.

While the groom has to find a suit, and ushers and bridesmaids need to be dressed, there are two other women who will have all-eyes on them – the mothers of the bride and groom.

There is a trick to styling these women – they need to match the location and feel of a wedding or theme, look chic but not steal any of the bride's thunder.

This means not only choosing the perfect dress, but also styling it alongside a hat or fascinator, and, of course, shoes and a handbag (for those all-important tissues).

Many mothers will also be looking for a look that will not break the bank.

In order to achieve all this, some companies offer help - for example, The Crystal Fairy Company in Birchington, who have a new collection of occasionwear, with pieces from specialists L'Atelier and Mascara.

Described as 'elegant' with 'beautiful fabrics', the outfits also co-ordinate with the shoes, handbags and fascinators stocked alongside them.

Other tips for mothers looking for their outfits is to leave plenty of time to try on various outfits -– this is a very important one,

and should not be rushed! Mothers are also advised to discuss their outfits beforehand, so they don't end up clashing with each other. Above all, the shopping experience should be fun.

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Packages with entertainment and a DJ are also on offer. The boat is available to hire from Mid-March to December 2015 - contact Linda Kennedy on 01622 753740 for further details or visit www.kentishlady.co.uk.

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Photos provided courtesy of Nicki Komorowski

Bridal trends for '15

This year's wedding looks...

EVERY season sees a spate of new trends hitting the bridal catwalks, and 2015 has been no different, with a whole host of looks that are sure to appeal to any taste.

This year saw ball gowns taking on a softer look thanks to breezy fabrics and a more relaxed silhouette, with many designers taking a lighter approach.

As a counterpoint to the decadence of ball gowns, a cleaner and more tailored look with clean lines featured heavily.

With no bling, lace or embellishment, the neat and precise look of this dress means the aesthetic is ideal for the bride who wants to be comfortable yet chic on her wedding day.

Colours are becoming popular, with not just the blush tones seen last year, but more unusual lavender and pistachio hues making an appearance.

One of the biggest changes over the last few years is the addition of sleeves to dresses.

While the strapless looks - that had been almost ubiquitous over the last decade, still remain popular, fashionable brides are turning to more modest looks, with one-shoulder, cap and illusion sleeves all popular with designers this season.

Movement was also a big theme - starched taffeta has lost much of its appeal, with models taking to the catwalk in more bohemian fabrics.

The popular 1920s and 30s influence shows no sign of abating, with delicate details and designs on many of this year's popular dresses.

As ever, the emphasis will continue to be based on what suits the bride's shape, theme and the way she wishes to look for the day - things that must be considered alongside what is fashionable.

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Lesser known readings for the quirkier couple...

We pick our favourite novel excerpts for romantic services

EVERY couple getting married is unique, and yet so often they end up choosing the same readings, and while popular biblical verses like Corinthians (love is patient, love is kind...) are undeniably pleasing, some may decide they want to take a lesser known path.

For those who don't want religious readings, there are lots of places to look – novels, poetry, and song lyrics, as well as children's books.

But with millions of words of prose to comb, it can be difficult to find the perfect reading – so we have compiled a guide for you.

A History of Love
By Nicole Krauss

Once upon a time, there was a boy. He lived in a village that no longer exists, in a house that no longer exists, on the edge of a field that no longer exists, where everything was discovered, and everything was possible. A stick could be a sword, a pebble could be a diamond, a tree, a castle. Once upon a time, there was a boy who lived in a house across the field, from a girl who no longer exists. They made up a thousand games. She was queen and he was king. In the autumn light her hair shone like a crown. They collected the world in small handfuls, and when the sky grew dark, and they parted with leaves in their hair.

Once upon a time there was a boy who loved a girl, and her laughter was a question he wanted to spend his whole life answering.

Jazz
By Toni Morrison

It's nice when grown people whisper to each other under the covers. Their ecstasy is more leaf-sigh than bray and the body is the vehicle, not the point. They reach, grown people, for something beyond, way beyond and way, way down underneath tissue. They are remembering while they whisper the carnival dolls they won and the Baltimore boats they never sailed on. The pears they let hang on the limb because if they plucked them, they would be gone from there and who else would see that ripeness if they took it away for themselves? How could anybody passing by see them and imagine for themselves what the flavor (sic) would be like? Breathing and murmuring under covers both of them have washed and hung out on the line, in a bed they chose together and kept together nevermind one leg was propped on a 1916 dictionary, and the mattress, curved like a preacher's palm asking for witnesses in His name's sake, enclosed them each and every night and muffled their whispering, old-time love.

The Princess Bride
By William Goldman

Do I love you? My God, if your love were a grain of sand, mine would be a universe of beaches... I have stayed these years in my hovel because of you. I have taught myself languages because of you. I have made my body strong because I thought you might be pleased by a strong body.
I have lived my life with only the prayer that some sudden dawn you might glance in my direction.
I have not known a moment in years when the sight of you did not send my heart careening against my rib cage.
I have not known a night when your visage did not accompany me to sleep. There has not been a morning when you did not flutter behind my waking eyelids...

I love you. Okay? Want it louder? I love you. Spell it out, should I? I ell-oh-vee-ee why-oh-you. Want it backward? You love I.

Making the most of your big event

How a rehearsal dinner spins out the magic

IT'S THE North American tradition that is winging its way over to Blighty – the rehearsal dinner is a celebration, usually held after the wedding rehearsal and on the night before the wedding ceremony.

The guests usually include the married-to-be couple and others who form the wedding party, including parents, ushers, bridesmaids and other attendants.

The purpose of the rehearsal dinner is for relatives and friends of the bride and groom to meet and have a good time - some relaxed frivolity before the more formal wedding event itself.

The couple will often take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped with the wedding preparations.

Activities generally include toasting and the presentation of small gifts for those who have helped plan the wedding.

Becky and Mike Smith decided to integrate a rehearsal dinner into their wedding celebrations.

"Because we live in the south east, and most of our family members live in the north, it made sense to maximise the time and money they spent getting here," Becky explains.

"It was also a really nice excuse to stretch the celebrations out that little bit further!"

Traditional rehearsal dinner etiquette dictates that the groom's parents foot the bill because it's the way for the groom's mother to show that she knows how to entertain, too.

But as more and more couples choose to pay for their own wedding or share the expenses between both families, the bottom line is you get to decide who shoulders the pre-wedding party responsibility.

It is recommended that couples make their restaurant reservation, as soon as possible, but the general consensus is at least three to six months in advance of the date.

By three months out, couples have a good idea how many guests will be attending and they can plan a menu that doesn't conflict with their wedding day.

Some experts say the couple should consider scheduling their rehearsal dinner on a Thursday night if they are having a Saturday wedding, which could reduce the cost of the rehearsal dinner, plus everyone can party as much as they want, sleep it off on Friday, and wake up for a wonderful wedding on Saturday.

There are so many great rehearsal dinner locations it's hard to pick one – a favourite restaurant is always a good choice.

Selecting a place that's close to the rehearsal site means it's convenient for those attending.

Many venues will let people reserve a private room – useful for breaking out the naked baby picture slides or karaoke machine

It's best to send out invitations four weeks before the event and, of course, after the wedding invitation.

You should never put the rehearsal dinner invite in with the wedding invite – remember, even though rehearsal dinners are a part of the wedding festivities, they really are two separate events.

Elegant, formal invitations are perfect for the wedding, but feel free to express your creativity with colour and thematic elements for the rehearsal dinner invites.

The same goes for the rest of the evening – where most couples may be constrained by tradition for their big day, they can aim for a more relaxed and informal ambience for their rehearsal dinner.

Becky says: "We had a rehearsal barbecue – the expense was worth it for a fun, informal evening for all."

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ROAR: Wildlife parks join a long list of attractions taking part in the My Kent Big Weekend

Don't miss out on the big free ticket giveaway

Applications for tickets to more than 100 of the county's top attractions must be received by this Tuesday for next month's My Kent Big Weekend

TIME is running out to register to be in with a chance of nabbing free tickets to this year's My Kent Big Weekend.

The traditional tourism season curtain-raiser sees thousands of tickets offered to those who live in the county to try out venues on their doorsteps.

Organised by the county's tourism champion Visit Kent, it is hoped word will spread to friends and family and help swell crowds during the rest of the year.

This year's event takes place over the weekend of March 21 and 22 with more than 100 attractions offering a total of 20,000 free tickets. It coincides with English Tourism Week.

Each household can obtain a maximum of one pair of tickets in total, but there is no limit to the number of attractions you apply for.

But don't hang around - you have to have applied for a pair before Tuesday, February 17 to be in with a chance.

Visit Kent chief executive Sandra Matthews-Marsh said: "We have a great range of businesses participating this year.

"This is the most exciting weekend of the year for us, as thousands of people get out and about in Kent and spread the word about just how much we have to offer."

Among those offering up tickets are the likes of wildlife parks Howletts and Port Lympne, Canterbury Cathedral, Dover Castle, the Historic Dockyards Chatham, the former home of Winston Churchill Chartwell, Kent County Cricket Club, and even the McArthurGlen Shopping Centre in Ashford which is offering special discount passes.

There's the chance to take part in action sports, boat trips, play golf or even try your hand at scuba diving.

All the details of tickets available - and the number of applications are on the event's dedicated website.

However, those applying are reminded not to be put off by lots of entries for the top attractions as others may be ineligible should they secure tickets for elsewhere.

Going into this weekend, there had already been 85,000 ballot entries so far.

Last year, more than 115,000 people applied for the 20,000 free tickets.

To register and see the full list of destinations taking part, as well as applying for tickets, visit the Kent Big Weekend website at www.mykentbigweekend.co.uk. Kent on Sunday is a media partner of the event.

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LOVE: Donkey gets up close and personal with the dragon on the Marlowe stage

Shrek swamp but is it a hit or a miss?

REVIEW: A musical, based on Dreamworks' animated classic has taken over the Marlowe in Canterbury. **Chris Britcher** casts a critical eye

TAKE a no-questions-asked animated movie success story, hurl a significant budget at it, mix in plenty of song and dance and plonk it on the stage, and the result? Well, in short, it's Shrek The Musical.

After a hugely successful run in London's West End, the show is now on the road and hitting the bigger theatres in the provinces.

And after the Marlowe Theatre's transformation a little over three years ago into major modern venue, it now delivers the capacity and facilities which make it ideal for such a high-profile production.

So this week it moved in, and, like trying to get an ogre out of his swamp, it is refusing to budge for a month.

Taking up residency until March 1, the show is perfect to attract people back to the live theatre environment. It has characters which everyone knows, a storyline familiar to all and more colour than a Dulux catalogue.

And judging by the make-up of the crowd, it's not a million miles away from those who would normally flock to enjoy the theatre's excellent festive pantomimes - from pensioners to five-year-olds and plenty in between.

The question is, after being trumpeted by the theatre for more than a year, is it worth the ticket money?

The answer is a resounding yes.

The songs are catchy, the script sharp and witty, and the costumes fabulous.

You'll know the story - ogre Shrek is tasked with saving a princess in a tower, guarded by a dragon, in order to stop his swamp being overrun by persecuted fairytale characters. He's joined by the ever-jabbering Donkey who decides Shrek is his new best friend. That Princess Fiona's fantasy of being save by Prince Charming is rudely awoken by Shrek's arrival. Cue some key revelations and the positive message of celebrating what you are.

It is some of the individual performances which shine so brightly. Faye Brookes as Princess Fiona is faultless. What's more, without the extensive make-up which Dean Chisnall (Shrek) requires, she injects life and emotion every time she takes to the stage.

FUN: After glory in the West End, Shrek The Musical is now on a UK tour

She, however, only shares the limelight with Lord Farquaad, played by Steffan Harri.

Without wishing to spoil some quite glorious visuals, Farquaad's portrayal is worth the entrance fee alone, and his set-pieces are laugh-out-loud entertainment.

Yet it would be unfair to identify just the pair of them; the ensemble work so well together and the characters are just so vibrant.

The second half in particular is just a glorious romp from start to finish.

If you're pondering whether to go, just do it, if you can still nab a ticket.

You will not be disappointed.

Shrek the Musical runs at the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury, until March 1. For details see www.marlowetheatre.com.

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FEMALE 38, attractive, African, single mum, seeks male, 35-50 for nights out, socialising, friendship and fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412793**

GENUINE 27yr old blonde, slim but busty, very naughty, seeks no strings meetings any age status. **Text Only Mailbox Box No: 4444830**

PETITE slim blonde 39yrs, pretty big blue eyes, looking for similar easygoing older male to put a spark back into my life, enjoy nights in/out and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412327**

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. **Tel No: 0905 002 1880 Box No: 413399**

WIDOW 70, lonely, seeking gent, 70-75 to bring a bit of sparkle back in life, likes theatre, cinema. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412475**

ADVENTUROUS sexy lady, 38yrs, married but seeks no strings fun with discreet man, any age. I'm tall, slim and dominant. Aca. **Tel No: 0905 002 1934 Box No: 415301**

KATIE 26yr old pretty slim blue eyed blonde looking for evening entertainment with open-minded discreet guy, any age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412319**

ANNE, mid 40's, cheerful busty cuvy affectionate real woman! Seeks gent, any age or looks for nights at mine. **Tel No: 0905 002 1950 Box No: 410291**

JANE 29yr old horsey female, loves the outdoors, cycling, as well as duvet days, WLTM not too serious male for a hopefully normal relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412315**

DISCREET lady, 42yrs wants to make you happy, come to me and let me do that for you. ACA. **Tel No: 0905 002 1954 Box No: 409901**

MARY 5ft 6in size 12 blonde, nice personality, good conversationalist, interesting, lots of interests WLTM likeminded caring, happy male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412169**

ALISON, 27 busty, shapely lady seeks fun only with broad minded man. Aca. **Tel No: 0905 002 1958 Box No: 416073**

CLARE 36yrs successful single mum, independent, employed with OHAC, size 10, green eyes, pretty, likes swimming, family life, seeking male with similar values and interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412053**

SUSIE, discreet married lady, young 36yrs seeks uncomplicated times with man any age or area, all texts answered. **Box No: 4459437**

SHARON 32yrs and still soul searching for Mr Right, I enjoy keeping in shape, caring for people, seeking loving respectful guy who also knows a good time. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412049**

FELICITY, professional female, 32yrs, blonde, curvy, fun. Travels a lot and wltm chap for occasional fun on my travels. **Box No: 4459438**

SLIM petite, attractive brunette, 56, British/Russian origin, excellent cook/home maker, seeks cultured male for serious relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412129**

LINDY, 43yrs young, married with husband away. Seeks discreet gent any age/area for no strings. **Box No: 4459439**

FREYA 33 6ft blonde, loves dancing and have a good time, employed, own home, one son, seeking similar laidback guy/dad for dates, chats and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412045**

JENNI, sensual lady, 23yrs seeks mature experienced man for no strings, daytime fun. **Box No: 4459440**

MARILYN really nice curvy tactile female, loves romantic walks, cosy nights in, quality times, looking for nice male to spend time and fall in love with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411871**

SALLY, 36yrs, married but husband works away seeks discreet gent any age for fun only. **Box No: 4492484**

JAN 5ft 6ins, dark hair/eyes, nice smile, likes music, travel, countryside, animals, employed, OHAC, looking for companionship with similar lonely heart. **Tel No; 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411865**

SAMANTHA, solvent, sensual business women, 38yrs, travels a lot and seeks fun on the road. I'm married so please be discreet. **Box No: 4495859**

SARAH 25 petite slim attractive blonde student, enjoys keeping fit, looking good, socialising, going out, being a mum WLTM similar fun genuine guy. **Tel No; 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411537**

JULIE attractive outgoing female with a very young attitude, loves running, living life, travel, WLTM someone special to make my life complete, hope you're out there. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411513**

FIONA, young 32yrs, seeks uncomplicated fun with chap any age or area, texts only please, I'm nervous on the phone. **Box No: 4495861**

LINDA 37, green eyes, attractive, bubbly size 12, enjoys cosy nights in, text chats, seeking tallish fun guy for meals out, pubs, clubs and spending quality times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411033**

RACHAEL, 36yrs, looking good for my age but need some daytime excitement. All text's answered. **Box No: 4507091**

64YR old lady, seeking male for friendship, companionship, outings and interesting conversation. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411975**

CAROLINE 39yr old pretty blonde looking for handsome caring man to put the sparkle back into my life and make each other feel special. Call me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411891**

33YR old sick of being single working mum, OHAC, likes the simple things in life, looking for romantic, honest guy with GSOH for cosy nights in and fun nights out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411887**

CINDY 31 attractive, size 12 brown eyed blonde, new to this but sick of passing up potential soul mate so thought I wld give it a go. ACA **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411873**

RITA divorced care worker with no ties, 5ft 1ins, dark hair, enjoys meals out, cosy nights in, seeking male 45-55 with GSOH and similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411775**

JANET 5ft 8ins, slim 12, pretty, green eyes, brown hair, seeking male companion for friendship hopefully leading to a relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411689**

MELANIE tall curvy attractive bubbly female who loves meals out, cosy nights in with a nice wine, walking, seeks professional male with outgoing GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411509**

LYN 34yrs, pretty petite dark haired female, loves music, meals out, quiet drinks out, seeking caring male with GSOH who can make me feel special again. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410137**

CAROLINE blonde curvy very active lady who loves to socialise, countryside, seeking similar caring male for LTR and to share good times with. **Tel No; 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409413**

SUE optimistic divorced lady with OHAC, good job, enjoys meals out, cinema, countryside, pub lunches, looking for likeminded outgoing happy male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410467**

CATHY very much a lady seeks gent up to 62yrs who would appreciate an independent professional sassy female who loves to be wined, dined and romanced. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410301**

WOULD you like to bounce into spring with me and onwards? Widow late 60's, enjoy most things in life, looking for someone to enjoy them with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411395**

LADY 60, size 12, easy going, likes animals, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411301**

SUSAN seeking nice male, medium build, 35, easygoing, likes music, nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406779**

MARIE 37yrs slim attractive caring, likes meals in/out, cinema, tennis, keeping fit/ active, WLTM fun loving, reliable man for friendship leading to more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411037**

SOPHIE 27yr old nursing assistant with no ties looking for discreet adult fun times with tall attractive guy 35-42yrs. GSOH essential. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410717**

34YR single mum of 1 who loves nights out having a good time seeks similar sociable fun guy to enjoy relaxed but extremely fun relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410709**

45YR old male, likes poetry, seeks companion for relationship. Herne Bay area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411993**

CHIPS on the pier, walks on the beach/countryside, VGSOH, 58yrs old, fit male, seeks female for laughs and love and whatever. NE Kent. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411725**

MALE 5ft 11ins, good-looking, athletic build, looking for discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411477**

DEREK seeking female, 50-60 for company, friendship and have fun together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411433**

MALE 49, attractive, fit, spontaneous, good company, no ties, seeking likeminded lady for the road ahead, nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411309**

RAY 63, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired, seeking no strings discreet meets for adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411147**

WORLD war veteran seeking happy lady with nice conversation in the Kent area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411133**

PAUL own business, looking for daytime fun with lady. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411127**

DAVE 65, retired, N/S, likes gardening, music, meals out, holidays, seeks female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410971**

MALE likes outdoor life, smoker, seeking local female for cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410755**

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611**

DEREK 5ft 11ins, slim-medium build, loving, caring, seeking black lady for possible relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410511**

EARLY 50's single male, smoker, seeking likeminded female for company and to share life. Must have GSOH, like animals, walks, home made food and nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410441**

DAVE 62, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired builder, seeks no strings discreet daytime meets for adult fun. Surrey. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410899**

41YR old male, dark hair, 5ft 11ins, easy going, likes music, guitar, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410411**

PHIL 6ft, clean shaven, blue eyes, smart, likes sports, walks, films, theatre, music, animals, GSOH, seeks female, 40-55 for fun and friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410351**

RETIRED male, fit, active, seeks no strings discreet meet with female, any age and size. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410343**

ADVENTUROUS male, mid 50's, seeks similar lady for fun and mutually enjoyable discreet relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410339**

CHRIS widower likes DIY, gardening, nights out, rock and roll, N/S, looking for LTR with female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410191**

ATTRACTIVE white gent, 48, 56ft, romantic, easy going, GSOH, seeking young lady, 60-75 for quality discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410025**

TALL black male, 45, likes meals out, good company, romantic, GSOH, light hearted, seeks easy-going female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409621**

RETIRED male, seeks no strings discreet meets with slim-medium build female, any age for adult fun. Dover. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409533**

MALE seeking attractive female for discreet fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409189**

MALE seeking female to love and be loved back. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408941**

FIT fellow, full of fun, 58, seeks to find fanciable lady for free and fascinating future for LTR. Find your jar half full. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405857**

CHRIS 52, slim, looking for female, 25-38, slim, 5ft 2ins plus for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408575**

DAVE 50, likes holidays, meals out, socialising, easy going, seeks female 40 plus. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408541**

ADAM 48, single dad, bored, seeking fun and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408421**

RETIRED male, seeks no strings discreet meets with slim-medium build female, any age for adult fun. Medway area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408343**

MALE 67, professional, fit, 5ft 10ins, medium build, reliable, tactile, likes most things, seeks slim lady, let's go! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407855**

STEVE 6ft 4ins, OHAC, seeking relationship, outdoor type, homely, wanting mutual good relationship with sexy woman. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407835**

Men Seeking

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KEEN cyclist 58, non-competitive, seeks similar female for sea wall, countryside ride, walking etc for fun, laughs and whatever. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413337**

RETIRED engineer 67, likes meals out, nights in, holidays, seeking slim lady, 60-65, young at heart to wine/dine, friendship and more. **Tel No; 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413161**

JAMES, 45yrs, solvent caring gent, recently divorced seeks genuine lady to wine and dine. Single mums welcome. **Box No: 4459441**

RETIRED male, seeks attractive female for friendship and fun, any age/status/colour. East Kent, can travel. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413133**

AMIABLE intelligent male, 77, light smoker, seeks slim lady for friendship/companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413127**

MATURE male, looking for discreet meetings with female. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413039**

FRANK 54, 5ft 10ins, blue eyes, blond hair, smoker, seeking friendship with mature female, 40-60, **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412893**

COMPANY Director, mature, late 50's, seeking female, any age for mutually rewarding friendship, Kent/Surrey area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412819**

IAN 5ft 11ins, likes rock/roll, singing, making people laugh, seeking someone special. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412799**

WRITER tall, slim, dark hair, generous, seeking broadminded lady for fun times. Any age/status. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412749**

BARRY divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412717**

MALE seeking friendship of mature woman, smoker. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412703**

SINGLE young lady, slim-medium build, 24-38 sought by mature male in Canterbury. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697**

MALE 48, looking for fun loving female to enjoy outdoor activities, nights in and meals out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392212**

JAMES young, free and single, please give me a call if interested. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412345**

EX headmaster, tall, dark, seeks adventurous lady, status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412263**

MALE 49, 5ft 10ins, likes cinema, reading, walks, seeks female in the Thanet area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412235**

BESIDE the Pointe. Literate self-possessing, legginess, kindred spirit sought by white male for elevating the bar. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412223**

BROWN eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377**

DIVORCED male, seeks Oriental lady, likes animals, music, will take care of you forever. Thanet area, willing to travel. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409963**

PROFESSIONAL male, early 40's, fun loving, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409961**

CANTERBURY mature male, medium build, GSOH, varied interests, sign language interpreter, seeks slim-medium build female, 24-42 for LTR. Single mum welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697**

PROFESSIONAL male, early 40's, fun loving, independent, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere, fun loving female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409745**

DAVE 50, seeks female of similar age for meals out, holidays etc. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408415**

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ACADEMIC: Flora Montgomery and Robert Cavanah. **CREDIT:** Mark Douet

Exploring the relationship between past and present

A play that takes place in two time zones will be performed at The Churchill

TOM Stoppard's comedy Arcadia will be performed at The Churchill Theatre as part of its first major tour since 1993.

The play has won countless awards including the 1993 Olivier and Evening Standard Awards for best new play.

Some of the action takes place in a stately home in 19th-century rural Derbyshire.

The bright and talented daughter of the house, Thomasina Coverly, makes a startling discovery well ahead of her time.

In the present day, academics Hannah Jarvis and Bernard Nightingale are attempting to piece together the fragments of the truth that tell her story.

Robert Cavanah, whose list of TV credits include Emmerdale, Waterloo and Silent Witness, will be taking on the role of Bernard Nightingale.

Mr Cavanah explained: "He is a don at a University. He thinks he's discovered that a character who was a guest at Sidley Park was killed by Lord Byron in a duel.

"If this is true then he's coming up with one of these great literary discoveries that will make him famous.

"It turns out a detail that he's missed in his excitement just to be famous is his undoing.

"Initially I thought he wasn't like me at all, but the more you play a part you realise the characters you are well cast for, you're cast for because they are most like you."

Arcadia explores the delicate relationship between past and present and paints a portrait of two generations of an aristocratic family as the focus moves from 1809 to now.

And Mr Cavanah is looking forward to getting his teeth into the new play.

"I get asked to do theatre at least a couple of times a year and I mostly turn it down.

"It depends on the role. I am not interested if it's not a big enough part that I can really get a journey out of.

"This is one of those plays where as it evolves we are still learning so much about it," he said.

"The play takes place in the two time zones so he's only concerned with the modern time zone.

"This had incredible meat to it. It was also comic, which is not something I have ever done before."

So how has he found the transition from TV to the stage?

"They are very different mediums," he said.

"But ultimately, stage or film, it's a thought process and as long as you are listening and reacting it will lead."

Tom Stoppard added: "I'm delighted a new tour of Arcadia, directed by the young, visionary Blanche McIntyre, is to take place.

"The current challenges for regional theatre in the UK mean that a production of this scale and quality are very rarely touched."

Dakota Blue Richards will be making her stage debut as Thomasina.

The performance will be taking place at The Churchill Theatre, Bromley from Monday, February 16, to February 21.

For more information or to book tickets, visit www.atgtickets.com/bromley.

» Email us details of your event to:
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Andy Parsons is unleashed

STAR of Mock The Week Andy Parsons will bring his new show to the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone, on February 26.

For tickets for Live and Unleashed- But Naturally Cautious, call 01622 758611.

Black Books star in town

KNOWN for his sardonic observational comedy, Dylan Moran will be bringing his new stand-up show to The Orchard Theatre, Dartford.

The star of Black Books and Shaun of the Dead will perform on March 31.

Visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk to book.

The Searchers to play gig

WITH hits including My Sweet and Sugar and Spice, The Searchers appeal to audiences of all ages.

They will perform at Theatre Royal Margate on March 21. Call 01843 292795 to book.

Dance thriller in Bromley

A MULTI-AWARD winning dance thriller, The Car Man, will be opening at The Churchill Theatre on April 16.

It tells the story of how a familiar 19th-century Spanish cigarette factory becomes a greasy garage-diner in 1960s America.

Visit www.atgtickets.com for details.

Thrilling performances in contemporary circus

By Molly Kersey
molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

INTERNATIONALLY acclaimed contemporary circus, Cirque Eloize, will be returning to The Marlowe Theatre.

A world leader in contemporary circus and firm favourite in the West End, Cirque Éloize combine circus arts with music, dance and theatre.

Based in Montreal, the company has been creating thrilling performances since 1993.

The show – Cirkopolis – will see 12 multi-disciplinary artists including jugglers, contortionists and aerial artists, challenge their limits and showcase their talents.

It features an inventive stage design and is accompanied by an original music score and video projections, using bursts of colour and imagination to entertain audiences.

Directed by artistic director Jeannot Painchaud and co-directed and choreographed by Dave St-Pierre, it aims to transport performers and spectators between dream and reality.

The performers are invited to rebel against monotony and reinvent themselves.

Mr Painchaud explained: "Cirkopolis was imagined as a crossroads – between imagination and reality, between individuality and community, between limits and possibilities.

"The show is driven by the poetic impulse of life, the physical prowess of the circus and the humour, at once serious and light-hearted.

"Entering Cirkopolis is all about letting go and allowing yourself to be borne aloft by hope."

Cirque Éloize: Cirkopolis will be performed at The Marlowe Theatre from March 3 to 7.

Performances will take place at 7.30pm and there will also be a 2.30pm matinee on the Saturday.

Tickets are priced from £16 to £31.50.

A booking fee applies and concessions are available.

Tickets are available now. To book call the box office on 01227 787787, or alternatively you can visit www.marlowetheatre.com

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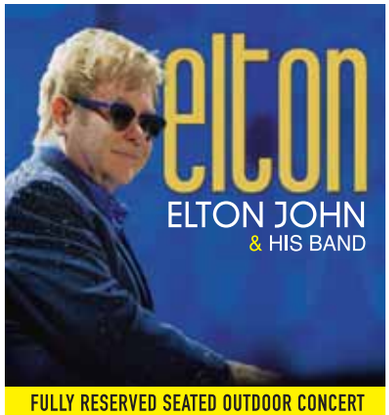

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Track where F1 legends trained hosts fun days

Buckmore Park Karting is where Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button honed their skills as youngsters

BUCKMORE Park Karting is famous for being the circuit where Formula One legends such as double world champion Lewis Hamilton and world champion Jenson Button honed their skills as boys.

It has seen a whole host of famous faces over the years having been visited by many young people who have been climbing the ladder to a successful career, and even by members of the Royal Family – Princess Diana paid a visit there with Princes William and Harry in 1992.

For a long time they have been offering 'arrive and drive' days for those aged four and over. This is when ordinary members of the public can just turn up and have a go at karting.

With two turn up 'n' drive circuits catering for drivers from aged four upwards and an MSA approved international circuit, Buckmore Park can offer karting for all – from a total novice to the most experienced.

Children aged four to seven can enjoy the thrill of driving the 6mph electric carts on the exciting 120m Kids Mini GP Circuit, complete with gradient and a hairpin bend.

The Paddock Circuit, complete with a fast straight, tight hairpin and gradient, provides those aged eight and over with an exciting circuit for their 'turn up 'n' drive karting.

Three age groups are catered for, each with their own fleet of karts.

The track is also available for exclusive hire for the families who want to be out on the track together.

EXCITING: Different age groups are catered for at Buckmore Park

And Buckmore Park have even more fun in store this year.

They will be introducing some new fun days for the family to enjoy.

Following numerous customer requests, Buckmore Park Karting will be introducing family Friday fun days.

These days are the same as the ever popular 'family turn up 'n' drive days' but with the added benefit of being able to pre-book a time slot.

The Club Circuit and National Circuit are available for turn up 'n' drive sessions on 'family days' and are pre-bookable for the family Friday fun days.

You can simply book your slot in advance either over the phone by calling 01634 661611 or online by visiting www. buckmore4kids.co.uk

The first family Friday fun day will take place on February 20.

However, for those who do not wish to pre-book – the circuit is again running it's very popular 'family turn up 'n' drive' karting days.

The first family day of 2015 will be taking place on Wednesday, February 18.

There are also many other activities which will be running throughout the school holidays.

For more information about what Buckmore Park Karting has to offer, you can visit their new responsive website at www.buckmore4kids.co.uk/turn-up-drive for a day to day diary of events.

Compulsive cleaners

A PRODUCTION company is looking for people to take part in hit Channel 4 show Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners.

The primetime series sees everyday people with a compulsion to clean up offer their services to people with disorganised houses in need of a spruce up, in the hope that they can learn from each other.

To find out more, contact betty production company on 02079070892.

Fresh talent needed

ORGANISERS of the Dartford Festival are looking for music acts, dance schools and groups to appear on the main stage.

Singers, bands and dance groups will have the chance to showcase their talents on July 18 and 19 at Central Park, following in the footsteps of Tank Trap and Prequels.

Email festival@dartford.gov.uk with details and relevent Youtube links to apply.

Beach huts in new play

ICE creams and deckchairs will feature in a comedy play at the Gravesend Theatre Guild.

Sandcastles will run from February 26 to 28 at 7.30pm.

The play is written by Bob Larbey – creator of some of well loved TV sitcoms including The Good Life and As Time Goes By.

Tickets are available now and can be bought by calling 07738416183.

Pun Gent in the county

STEWART Francis will bring his hilarious new show Pun Gent! to the Assembly Hall Theatre on May 29.

The star of Mock the Week and Live at the Apollo has dedicated the show to his father.

Tickets and £18.50 with a £1.25 per ticket booking fee.

To book, call the box office 01892 530613 or book online at www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk

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Just turn the lights back on

THE whole of Kent is against street lighting being turned off.

I would like to point out the total waste of electric power by the council, they are not saving money by turning off local lighting which is dangerous they are using monies saved to pay for the more than four miles of motorway lighting which is not required.

One drives down the M20 quite safely from Ashford where there is no lighting, then, the last 4 miles before one reaches Cheriton the motorway is ablaze with lights...why?

I have driven all over the country on many motorways and not come across this total waste of energy yet I have never heard anybody mention it...again why? It would be more to the point to turn those off.

Have our great leaders in the council local or otherwise an answer?

John R O'Neon,
Folkestone

NHS is piggy in the middle

NHS managers rarely get a good press so I'd like to go some way to re-address the balance and support the chief executive of the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust, Glenn Douglas.

All trusts have the impossible job of implementing a contradictory set of Government instructions that is claimed to be 'health policy'.

The Coalition's 'reorganisation', according to the independent King's Fund report published last week, has been damaging and wasteful.

It starts with the Government insisting on "efficiency savings" (cuts to you and me), and it's impossible to take £20 billion from the NHS budget without reducing staff .

But then the Government and Care Quality Commission want staffing levels up to safer new standards. The trust then has to go to agencies to buy in the same staff they once employed at a higher price.

So more staff are hired, the trust "overspends" and Monitor turn up (costing a fortune) and criticise management for not producing "efficiency savings".

Staff levels are cut to balance the books, and the CQC turn up again (costing another fortune) to say the staffing levels are dangerous. Around we go again.

It's time to sack those (ie the politicians) who tie our health care up in bureaucratic knots and who think commercialising is the way forward.

This is no way to run our NHS.

We spend less on health than the other G7 countries. Investing more would produce much greater efficiency, but short-sighted politicians from the three main parties can't see past their obsession with "austerity".

Dr Paul Hobday,
Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Maidstone and the Weald for the National Health Action Party

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Bill on fracking is full of gaping holes

WHILE we all welcome the fact that the 13 amendments meant to strengthen the regulation of fracking were adopted by the Commons at the end of January (KoS, 01.02), we fear that the devil is in the detail, and note that this is a sloppily drafted Bill.

In Jamie Weir's article you state that "areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONBs), sites of special interest and national parks will no longer be open to any sort of fracking, as well as any extraction in areas which could impact on water supplies". Would that we could believe this!

With reference to the first of these issues, the phrase "except under exceptional circumstances" remains in the Bill. This is very vague and therefore represents a large loophole.

Even vaguer than this is the reference to stopping any extraction "in land which is located within the boundaries of a groundwater protection zone".

The area is not defined. If this were to be applied with rigour to protect our water, this would rule out fracking in the Bowland Shale, the UK's richest source of shale gas.

Other examples of dangerous vagueness in the wording of the clauses are :

"Unless independent inspections are carried out on the integrity of wells"; This could be someone contracted by the operator;

"Unless monitoring has been undertaken on the site over the previous 12 month period" - monitoring for what, and by whom?;

"Unless residents in the affected area are notified on an individual basis" - the area is not defined. Ten metres? One mile?

There are more examples like this, all of which demonstrate that what was needed was a moratorium (as declared by Scotland and Wales) to enable proper analysis of all the issues surrounding unconventional energy extraction to be undertaken.

And not a mere two hour airing of a badly drafted Bill that essentially leaves the industry self-regulating with the capacity to irreversibly damage underground water resources, pollute the environment and change all our lives for the worse.

Rosie Rechter
Chair, East Kent Against Fracking

We need checks on food banks

I HAVE to take issue on some of your comments about food banks.

I do not know if these people are in genuine need but what I do know if you give something away for free without checks and balances, you create a demand – a demand which may not be genuine.

I own flats and recently two of my tenants who are unemployed had their benefits changed and as such their money was suspended.

Both went to the local food bank. They had to supply evidence they had been suspended. Both got £50 of food and £50 towards electricity.

Yet no one came to their flats to see if they were in need, if they did they would have seen a full larder and full fridge-freezer, Neither of them stopped smoking, going to the pub, using the mobile or driving their car.

Ten days later they were reinstated and their benefit was back-dated. Were they asked to pay back what they received from the food bank? No.

My point is that before issuing this free food, surely someone should look into the background of who is receiving it.

This in fact would help the genuinely needy and could help them manage their finances better, as sometimes people do fall on hard times and giving a helping hand can become a life saver.

The problem with the system at the moment is it is too easy for those who are not in need, to take advantage of the system

Martin Clarke,
Sittingbourne

M20 mess sends poor message

MAY I draw your attention to the extraordinary amount of litter along the sides of the M20/A20 between Ashford at junction 10 and Dover.

I have never before seen it so bad, what a bad impression it must give to tourists visiting this country, surely something must be done about it?

Ted Prangnell,
Ashford

We'd be better off out of the EU

THE numerous claims made about how necessary it is for us to be in the EU are disingenuous (KoS letters, last week).

Any of the 'positive' incentives can be easily taken up locally and as for the 'grants', it's a bit like giving somebody £100 and saying you couldn't possibly manage without the £10 they gave you back!

There are more jobs in the EU reliant on us, than the other way round and the EU buys more from us than we do them.

To believe the whole of the EU will 'cut off it's nose to spite it's face' if we dare to go back to being independent, rather than run by this undemocratic and wasteful behemoth, is scaremongering in the extreme.

You have to wonder at the motives of politicians, who even now with the evidence of the collapse of Greece and others, still think we should join the Euro!

As usual their own self interests are put before the good of us and this country now billions in debt and wasting hundreds of billions, while importing immigrants the size of a small city each year.

Phil Granger,
West Malling

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Deal Pier

by **Chris Searson, Doer**

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Spring Back to the 60s Seaside Party

Pontins Pakefield, near Lowestoft, Suffolk Coast

£129PP • 3 nights half board plus • Friday 13 March, 2015

Join us for a private party that evokes the heady days of the 60s at Pontins Pakefield, on the Suffolk Coast near Lowestoft. Enjoy live entertainment from The Tremeloes and the Swinging Blue Jeans as well as tributes to The Beatles and Buddy Holly, plus Free Drinks every night and lots of nostalgic fun.

INCLUDED: 3 Free Drinks per person per night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers

- Entertainment
- 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts
- 3 nights en-suite CHALET - upgrade available

FREE Drinks

Entertainment Each Night

Over 40s only

Quote US3-KOS

Bournemouth Spring Party - Suncliff Hotel

£189PP • 4 nights half board plus • Monday 2 March, 2015

Join us for a spring break at one of Bournemouth's premier 3 star hotels, The Suncliff, situated on the resort's prestigious East Cliff within easy walking distance of all its attractions. The Suncliff has an indoor leisure complex with a heated pool, sauna, mini gym and squash courts with viewing gallery (small charge applies). You will also enjoy a 99p bar and live entertainment every evening.

INCLUDED: 99p bar 6-9pm nightly - house beers and spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers

- Live nightly entertainment
- 4 breakfasts and 4 dinners
- 4 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV & tea/coffee tray - upgrades available

99p Drinks 6pm to 9pm

Entertainment Each Night

Over 40s only

Quote BM3-KOS

Worthing Winter Warmer Party - Chatsworth Hotel

£99PP • 2 nights half board plus • Friday 13 March, 2015

Join us in Worthing for a Winter Warmer Party and enjoy £1 drinks and live entertainment every night. The Chatsworth is one of the finest hotels on the south coast, just a stone's throw from the sea and a short stroll to the town centre. All bedrooms are en-suite and a lift services all floors.

INCLUDED: £1 drinks from 7pm to 10pm both evenings - pint of house beer or small glass of wine

- 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts
- Live nightly entertainment
- 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV & free wifi

£1 Drinks 7pm to 10pm Each Night

Entertainment Each Night

Over 40s only

Quote WO3-KOS

Christmas Cracker Party through the Decades
Pontins Pakefield, near Lowestoft, Suffolk Coast

£129PP • 3 nights half board plus • Friday 20 November, 2015

Original 70s band Brotherhood of Man

Join us for an over 40s Christmas party weekend to remember as we re-wind the decades and go back to the 60s, 70s and 80s at Pontins Pakefield, by the sea near Lowestoft, Suffolk. Add 3 Free Drinks per person per night and you've got the perfect recipe for a great party weekend.

INCLUDED:

- 3 Free drinks every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers
- Full entertainment programme
- 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrade available
- 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners

FREE Drinks

Entertainment Each Night

£10pp Deposit

Over 40s only

Quote CC11-KOS

Best of the 60s and 70s Christmas Party
Warner Norton Grange, Isle of Wight

£239PP • 3 nights semi-all-inclusive • Friday 27 Nov, 2015

Great Entertainment, Free Drinks, and a super location make Warner's Norton Grange resort, at Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight, our most popular Christmas Party venue.

This Christmas we're featuring music from the 60s & 70s including Edison Lighthouse (Love Grows where my Rosemary goes) plus tributes to Dusty Springfield and Tom Jones and lots of festive and nostalgic fun.

There's also a Free Bar from 6pm to midnight every night.

INCLUDED: Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & pumped mixers

- 3 dinners and 3 breakfasts
- Live nightly entertainment
- 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades available
- Return car ferry

FREE Drinks

Entertainment Each Night

£10pp Deposit

Car Ferry Included

Over 40s only

Quote XN11-KOS

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By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

KEEPING THEM APPEALING: The Kia Rio and (below) the Kia Venga

Korean maker Kia gives small car range a refresh

IN an era of downsizing and economical/ecological conscientiousness, Kia is refreshing its small car line-up.

The compact end of the market is where competition is stiffest and the profits slimmest, meaning that all contenders must be on their mettle.

So, while there wasn't much wrong with Kia's offerings – especially when backed by an industry-leading seven-year/100,000-mile warranty – the Korean marque has pre-empted any fall-off in sales.

Revamped versions of the racy Rio supermini and its small MPV counterpart, the Venga, are already on sale, while the Picanto city car's new look will be unveiled officially at the Geneva show shortly.

The three/five-door Rio has had its sporty style enhanced with new bumpers, while the seats and dashboard have had a justifiable upgrade.

In-car 'tech' – important to younger buyers – has also been boosted by touchscreen sat nav and DAB digital radio

Most manual gearbox versions have a fuel-saving, emissions-reducing engine stop/start system, which contributes towards the 1.1-litre diesel model achieving an official fuel economy figure of up to 88.3mpg.

Despite its practical dimensions, the Venga's restyled front and rear ends have sharpened its looks and appeal, while specifications have been boosted and a Venga 4 flagship model added, which gets a panoramic roof as standard to enhance the glassy cabin. Similar infotainment upgrades to the Rio are also available.

Not surprisingly, the revised Picanto gets similar attention: redesigned front and rear bumpers but, in line with the growing sophistication of the city car sector, options also include a new 14-inch alloy wheel design and optional sport pack.

New chrome accents have also taken the interior upmarket, complemented by three interior colour packs to enhance customisation choices.

The sporty Red Pack, for instance, features black artificial leather and red cloth seats, plus high-gloss red and black door panel inserts.

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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for All-New Renault Twingo SCe 70 are: urban 50.44 (5.6); extra-urban 72.43 (3.9); combined 62.77 (4.5). The official CO_2 emissions are 105g/km. EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008 test environment figures. Fuel consumption and CO_2 may vary with driving styles, road conditions and other factors.

4+ The 2015 4+ package applies to new vehicles when ordered from a UK Renault-approved dealer from 1 January 2015. All vehicles provided with 4 years' warranty and Renault Assistance as standard. Warranty 4 years/100,000 miles (whichever comes first). For full Renault Warranty terms and conditions visit www.renault.co.uk/warranty. For Renault Assistance terms and conditions visit www.renault.co.uk/assistance. Finance provided by RCI Financial Services Limited, PO Box 149, Watford WD17 1FJ. Subject to status. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. You must be at least 18 and a UK resident (excluding the Isle of Man and Channel Islands). Terms and conditions apply. Our dealership introduces customers to a limited number of financial providers including RCI Financial Services Ltd. Offer based on 6,000 miles pa, excess mileage 8p per mile inc VAT. Offers cannot be used with other schemes or finance offers and are available on featured new vehicles when ordered by 31 March 2015 and registered by 30 June 2015. Car shown with optional Powder Blue paint at £225.

The Twingo – the city car alternative

French marque Renault's third generation Twingo city car model is radical, clever, cheap to run and, above all, fun writes Steve Loader...

CITY cars must be the nightmare design brief.

You can image the manufacturer saying: "It must be frugal, fun, compact and manoeuvrable, but carry at least four people in comfort and have a decent boot, oh, and don't make it ugly."

So Mr Designer shuffles off, muttering "Cheers, thanks" before trying to work a miracle... and we are still waiting.

But some efforts come closer to dream creation than others: Renault's third generation Twingo (from £9,995) is one.

The previous car (2007-2014) was too conventional: a small and rather bland three-door that shone in high performance guise, but not as eco-friendly urban runabout.

The new car couldn't be more different. It's a cute five-door, 10cm shorter on the outside, but far roomier on the inside, and touches most of the aforementioned city car bases

How has our frazzled Mr Designer created this? By sharing his problems with his mate at Germany's Smart, creating a rear engine/rear-driven layout that also underpins the forthcoming Smart ForFour.

This has allowed what I rate as a proper city car because it delivers a turning circle of just 8.59 metres, with the front wheels swinging through an impressive 45 degrees.

With four side doors and decent leg and head room for all four passengers it could even qualify as a miniature London cab, but for a modest boot dictated by the rear engine.

Unlike some past cars of similar format, there is no luggage space under the bonnet either; Renault says this area was needed to beef up crash safety on such a compact car.

To compensate for the modest 188-litre boot though, the rear seatbacks can be set in a 'cargo' position at 90 degrees to boost volume to 219 litres, while still carrying two rear passengers. With the 50:50 split-folding rear seats lowered, the boot space rises to 980 litres and a folding front passenger seat comes as standard – unique for the city car segment.

You might now ask whether the rear engine and consequent light front end recreates the Achille's Heel of classics like the VW Beetle and older Porsche 911s.

But the Twingo fields all the modern driving aids to keep the little car on track Indeed, it's good fun thanks to two lively three-cylinder petrol power options: a naturally aspirated 999cc 70bhp, and 898cc 89bhp turbocharged unit.

The former is cheaper to buy and run and doesn't feel slow even if 0-62mph in 14.5 seconds is modest and, besides, the lavish Twingo customisation options are what most customers are more interested in.

My favourite is the turbo, as tested here. It costs more, but you'll get that cash back in extra pace and flexibility.

Renault Twingo Dynamique Energy TCe 90 Stop

Price:	£11,695
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
How green?:	★★★★★
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11 61	CHEVROLET CRUZE 1.4 LT 5DR, 20,874 Miles	£6,224
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11 61	CHEVROLET CRUZE 1.6i LS 4DR, 10,131 Miles	£6,777
11 61	CHEVROLET CRUZE 1.6i LT 5DR, 16,178 Miles	£6,271
08 08	FIAT DOBLO DYNAMIC 1.9 5DR, 48,759 Miles	£5,838
08 08	FORD C-MAX TITANIUM 2.0TDCi 5DR, 55,998 Miles	£6,468
12 62	FORD FIESTA TITANIUM 1.0 (s/s), 16,006 Miles	£9,650
13 13	FORD FIESTA ECOBOOST 1.0 (s/s), 12,378 Miles	£9,807
11 61	FORD FOCUS ZETEC 1.6 5DR, 11,009 Miles	£8,945
11 61	FORD FOCUS ZETEC POWER 1.6 5DR, 9,787 Miles	£9,416
11 61	FORD FOCUS ZETEC 2.0 TDCi 5DR, 9,973 Miles	£10,235
11 11	FORD KA TITANIUM 1.2 3DR, 32,208 Miles	£5,825
12 62	KIA SOUL 1.6 1 5DR, 14,377 Miles	£8,540
11 61	KIA SOUL 1.6CRDi 2 5DR, 34,624 Miles	£7,125
11 61	KIA SOUL 1.6CRDi 2 5DR, 20,655 Miles	£7,127
11 61	KIA SOUL HUNTER 1.6CRDI 5DR, 24,071 Miles	£7,247
09 59	MINI COOPER CONVERTIBLE 1.6 2DR, 28,782 Miles	£8,562
11 61	MINI COOPER HATCH 1.6 Cooper 3DR, 15,985 Miles	£9,823
13 63	NISSAN JUKE ACENTA PREM 1.5dCi, 7,248 Miles	£12,378
13 13	NISSAN JUKE TEKNA 1.5dCi 5DR, 8,394 Miles	£12,871
13 63	NISSAN JUKE TEKNA 1.5dCi 5DR, 3,260 Miles	£13,220
11 61	NISSAN MICRA ACENTA 1.2 5DR, 5,302 Miles	£7,177
12 62	NISSAN NOTE 1.4 N-TEC + 5DR, 8,443 Miles	£8,221
11 61	NISSAN NOTE 1.4 N-TEC 5DR, 25, 299 Miles	£6,348
13 13	NISSAN NOTE 1.6 N-TEC + 5DR, 5,900 Miles	£9,480
13 13	NISSAN NOTE 1.6 N-TEC + 5DR, 3,731 Miles	£9,564
11 61	NISSAN NOTE 1.6 N-TEC 5DR, 30,418 Miles	£6,309
11 11	NISSAN NOTE 1.6 N-TEC 5DR, 15,464 Miles	£6,426

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11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA 1.5dCi 5DR, 17,459 Miles	£10,540
11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA 1.5dCi 5DR, 12,850 Miles	£10,676
14 14	NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA 1.5dCi 5 DR, 1,758 Miles	£17,944
11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI 1.5dCi N-TEC 5DR, 36,172 Miles	£10,942
11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI 1.5dCi N-TEC 5DR, 35,877 Miles	£11,524
11 11	NISSAN QASHQAI 1.5dCi N-TEC 5DR, 29,715 Miles	£11,676
11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI 1.5dCi N-TEC 5DR, 21,538 Miles	£12,165
11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI 1.5dCi N-TEC 5DR, 46,526 Miles	£12,288
11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI 1.5dCi N-TEC 5DR, 15,741 Miles	£12,418
07 07	NISSAN QASHQAI TEKNA 2.0 5DR, 19,224 Miles	£7,958
11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI 2.0dCi N-TEC 5DR, 8,320 Miles	£15,376
11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA+ 2 1.5dCi, 13,444 Miles	£12,121
10 10	NISSAN QASHQAI+2 1.5dCi N-TEC, 21,403 Miles	£10,950
11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI+2 1.5dCi N-TEC+, 23,341 Miles	£12,821
11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI+2 1.5dCi N-TEC+, 25,614 Miles	£13,120
11 61	NISSAN QASHQAI+2 1.5dCi N-TEC+, 19,071 Miles	£13,405
13 13	NISSAN X-TRAIL 2.0dCi N-TEC+ 5DR, 18,806 Miles	£18,411
11 11	NISSAN X-TRAIL TEKNA 2.0dCi 5DR, 29,582 Miles	£15,843
11 61	PEUGEOT 207 ACCESS 1.6HDi 5DR, 50,645 Miles	£5,801
12 12	PEUGEOT PARTNER TEPEE 1.6HDi T, 14,315 Miles	£8,737
11 61	RENAULT CLIO LINE TOM TOM 1.6 GT, 13,057 Miles	£6,378
11 11	RENAULT GRAND SCENIC 1.5dCi, 17,167 Miles	£9,060
11 61	RENAULT GRAND SCENIC EXPRESSION 1.6, 6,712 Miles	£7,864
11 61	RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 1.6, 5,552 Miles	£6,786
11 61	SEAT LEON ECOMOTIVE 1.6TDI S C, 18,410 Miles	£9,084
11 61	SKODA FABIA 1.2 S DSG 5DR, 10,360 Miles	£7,378
10 60	SUZUKI SWIFT 1.3 SZ3, 12,785 Miles	£6,306

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12, 107 miles
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11 61	VAUXHALL AGILA 1.2 SE 5DR, 16.240 Miles	£5,871
11 61	VAUXHALL ASTRA EXCLUSIVE 1.4i VVT, 15,088 Miles	£7,851
14 14	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.4i VVT SRi 5DR, 16,689 Miles	£9,817
13 13	VAUXHALL ASTRA ENERGY 1.6i VVT, 4,225 Miles	£9,419
11 61	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6i VVT SE 5DR, 22,242 Miles	£8,043
11 61	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6i VVT SE 5DR, 5,685 Miles	£8,620
11 63	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6i VVT SE 5DR, 12,582 Miles	£9,889
14 14	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6i VVT SE 5DR, 12,234 Miles	£10,171
11 61	VAUXHALL ASTRA 2.0CDTi SRi 5DR, 9,993 Miles	£8,599
12 62	VAUXHALL ASTRA GTC 1.4i SPORT, 17,410 Miles	£9,786
12 62	VAUXHALL ASTRA GTC 1.4i SPORT, 14,447 Miles	£9,909
13 13	VAUXHALL ASTRA GTC 1.4i SPORT, 8,700 Miles	£10,032
13 13	VAUXHALL ASTRA GTC 1.6i SRi 3DR, 11,808 Miles	£11,381
12 62	VAUXHALL CORSA ACTIVE 1.2i 5DR, 8198 Miles	£6,706
13 13	VAUXHALL CORSA ENERGY 1.2i 3DR, 8,596 Miles	£6,689
14 14	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4i (a/c) SRi, 12,079 Miles	£8,510
14 14	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4i (a/c) SRi, 9,703 Miles	£8,603
14 14	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4i (a/c) Sri, 9,452 Miles	£8,611
14 14	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4i (a/c) Sri, 9,019 Miles	£8,626
14 14	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4i (a/c) Sri, 8,648 Miles	£8,641
14 14	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4i SE 5DR, 12,000 Miles	£8,141
14 14	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4i SE 5DR, 9,829 Miles	£8,243
14 14	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4i SXi 5DR, 8,525 Miles	£7,519
14 14	VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4i SXi 5DR, 8,144 Miles	£7,533
11 61	VAUXHALL INSIGNIA 1.8i VVT Sri, 24,928 Miles	£8,780
13 13	VAUXHALL INSIGNIA 2.0CDTi SE 5, 21,060 Miles	£10,667
12 62	VAUXHALL INSIGNIA 2.0CDTi Sri, 12377 Miles	£11,875
14 14	VAUXHALL INSIGNIA TECH 2.0CDTi, 6,664 Miles	£16,920
12 62	VAUXHALL MERIVA 1.3CDTi (a/c), 20,451 Miles	£10,028
11 61	VAUXHALL MERIVA EXCLUSIV 1.4i, 5,250 Miles	£7,271
12 62	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA DESIGN 1.6i VVT, 18,434 Miles	£8,965
11 61	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA ELITE 1.7CDTi, 29.322 Miles	£8,456
11 61	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA EXCLUSIV 1.7CDTi, 24,655 Miles	£7,692
11 11	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA EXCLUSIV 1.7CDTi, 5,473 Miles	£8,190
11 61	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA ELITE 1.7TD 5DR, 20,928 Miles	£8,594
11 11	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.8i SRi 5DR, 47,853 Miles	£6,212
14 14	VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 2.0CDTi SRi 5DR, 5,504 Miles	£14,399
11 61	VOLVO S40 2.0 SE 4DR, 10,356 Miles	£9,236
11 61	VOLVO S40 2.0 SE Lux 4DR, 45,237 Miles	£8,392

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Act as on-site support for students requiring medical attention including escorting to hospital appointments, able to provide admin support and carryout domestic tasks i.e. bed making and general tidiness of the Medical Centre. Applicants must be prepared to fully contribute to the general welfare of students, be flexible and able to work as part of a small team. Experience of working with children, excellent use of IT packages and administration are essential plus a good working knowledge of and training in first aid. Hours are 37.5 per week, term time only, 0730 - 1500 hours, Monday to Friday. Salary: £12,805 pa (payment is for 40 weeks a year & includes holiday payment).

Closing date:
Midday, Wednesday 25 February.
Interviews: Friday 27 February

A package of benefits includes free meals whilst on duty, use of pool and gym on site. An application form and further details can be obtained from the School's website: ***www.doyrms.com*** *and emailing* ***reception@doyrms.com*** *or* ***01304 245023.***

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Candidates must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post including checks with past employers and via the Disclosure and Barring Service.

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Before you send off your CV or upload it to a job board you need to be 100% confident you are putting your best foot forward.

1. Check and double check grammar and spelling
2. Exaggeration - Don't be tempted to invent qualifications or embellish the extent of your work experience.
3. Keep it concise and clear - Less is more. Aim for two pages, maximum.
4. No repetition - Always check that you haven't used the same words for describing different skills, work experience, or interests.
5. Tailor Your CV - Don't be tempted to send the same CV to a large number of employers. Tailoring it will give you a better chance of success.
6. Presentation - Use a commonly used font such as Times Roman or Arial
7. Highlight achievements - Remember the purpose/goal of the CV is to get the interview - it needs to stand out and help you sell yourself.
8. Back up with examples - Try to include examples of any skill or achievement. This will give an employer an idea of how you have used your skills.
9. Use your friends and family - Get someone to proof read your CV.
10. Keep it fresh - Update your CV whenever you've gained more experience.

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THE NEW SCHOOL AT WEST HEATH

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The New School at West Heath is a Specialist Independent Residential School for diverse range of needs, Co-Ed, age 10-19 providing education and therapy for male and female students with who have emotional & social communication difficulties.
We are pleased to advertise a new position.

HEAD OF EDUCATION OFFSITE (EOS)

West Heath is seeking fully qualified teacher to lead our offsite education team The successful applicant will need to have experience of managing teams as well as having outstanding organisation and communication skills, Networking with community organisations and writing appropriate learning packages for our West Heath students are all part of the qualities we are looking for in this post.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young adults.
Successful candidates will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check

Applications and JD can be found on the web-site www.westheathschools.com

Contact **lynne.mcgrath@westheathschool.com** or tel: **01732 460553** if you have any questions

Closing date for applications is **2nd March 2015**

Swale Academies Trust

Westlands School

Westlands Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1PF

Pupil Intervention Manager

Required for immediate start
Salary range £17,302 - £19,031

We are seeking a full time member of staff who will join our Inclusion Team working with the Deputy Head Pupil Engagement. Duties will include leading the pupil support provision, delivering intervention programs, dealing with behaviour management, supporting pupils and liaising with staff and parents/carers. Applicants should refer to person specification and job description for full details.

Flexibility, an ability to multitask and experience of working with young people is essential.

Best Eight value added score places the school significantly above others nationally.

Ofsted 2012 'OUTSTANDING'

Recruitment packs are available from Westlands School or online (www.westlands.org.uk). A covering letter of application should be included with your application form detailing how you meet the requirements of the job description and person specification. Please note that we cannot accept CVs alone.

Closing date: 20 February 2015 (noon)

Swale Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Contact Details
Tel: 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461
Email swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mr S Cox MA Trust Principal: Mr J Whitcombe MA
Swale Academies Trust Company No 7344732
Registered Office: Ashdown House, Johnson Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1JS

Please mention this paper when replying to
SMALL ADS

LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE
LICENSING ACT 2003
Application for Grant of New Premises Licence

I Mark Lucas hereby give notice that I have made an application to the to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR for grant of a new premises license the provision of licensable activities:

Sale of Alcohol from 09.00 – 23.00 Sundays to Thursdays and Fridays, Saturdays and Bank Holiday Sundays from 09.00 -24.00 and

Late Night Refreshment 23.00 – 24.00 Fridays, Saturdays and Bank Holiday Sundays

In respect of the premises situated at 2-3 College Yard, Rochester, Kent ME1 1LB to be known by the sign of Crepe and Co Pancake Parlour. A Copy of the application can be inspected at the Licensing Department, Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR during office hours or on our website at www.medway.gov.uk/licensing.

Any person who wishes to make a representation in relation to this application must give notice in writing to: Licensing Unit at the Council Offices or by e-mail to licensing@medway.gov.uk by 5th March 2015 or by telephone 01634 337107 after which date no objections will be considered.

It is an offence, under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in or in connection with an application for premises licence and the maximum fine on being convicted of such an offence is £5000.

Stephen Thomas LAW,
Solicitors for the Applicant,
8, Grassmere, Leybourne, Kent ME19 5QP

LICENSING ACT 2003
Application for Premises Licence

We, the Chatham Maritime Trust, are applying for a new premises licence at: Dock Square, Maritime Way, Chatham ME4 4QZ. Our application is made to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR.

We are applying for the following licensable activities: Plays, films, live and recorded music, the performance of dance and the supply of alcohol on the premises only, between 10.00 and 23.00hrs every day; Late Night Refreshment 23.00 to 23.30hrs every day.

Should you wish to make representations to the council it must be in writing and/or you can view our application by contacting the council on 01634 337107 or 337108 by: 04/03/2015.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £5,000.

For more information contact Licensing Unit by telephone: Licensing Services - 01634 337107 or 337108; Enforcement - 01634 337112 or 337106 or by email: licensing@medway.gov.uk

Write to: Licensing Unit, Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR

PLEASE MENTION THIS NEWSPAPER WHEN REPLYING TO THESE ADVERTISEMENTS

PLANNING

Folkestone Hythe & Romney Marsh
Shepway District Council

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the Council:

Y15/0093/SH# - Hucklebury House Boarmans Lane Brookland Romney Marsh Kent - Erection of a single storey side extension, together with other external alterations.

Y15/0082/SH - 3 East Cliff House Radnor Cliff Crescent Folkestone Kent CT20 2JQ - Overall crown reduction of a Pine tree subject of Tree Preservation Order No. 11 of 2014, by a maximum of 0.75 metres

Y15/0078/SH+ - Walnut Tree Mews High Street Hythe Kent CT21 5LW - Formation of a first floor balcony to the rear elevation.

Y11/0137/SH* - Land Adjoining Sir John Moore Barracks Military Road Sandgate Kent - Outline application for the erection of 5 detached houses, including details of layout, scale and access, together with the change of use and conversion of Martello Tower 6 to a residential holiday let and Martello Tower 7 and adjacent underground water tank to a dwelling, together with associated access road and engineering works, parking, landscaping and ancillary outbuilding to serve Martello Tower 6.

Y15/0096/SH - Thomas Acre Farm White Horse Lane Wingmore Canterbury Kent - The development of a shared electronic communications base station comprising a 30m high lattice mast, six antennas, two 0.6m DIA dishes and six ground based radio equipment cabinets installed within a fenced compound

Y15/0080/SH - Cirilla Radnor Cliff Crescent Folkestone Kent CT20 2JQ - Erection of a single storey side extension, formation of a balcony, and other external alterations, together with extension of existing garage to create a linked garden workshop.

Y15/0074/SH+ - Selworthy Church Road Hythe Kent CT21 5DP - Extension and alteration to roof including installation of a front dormer window in connection with loft conversion, together with two storey rear extension.

Y15/0075/SH+ - Point View Church Road Hythe Kent CT21 5DP - Extension and alteration to roof including installation of a front dormer window in connection with loft conversion, together with two storey rear extension.

Y15/0071/SH - 90A Sandgate Road Folkestone Kent CT20 2BE - Change of use and conversion of existing office and maisonette to 2 self contained flats together with replacement doors and windows

Y14/0829/SH+ - The Fishermans Landing Beach Range Road Hythe Kent - Section 73 Minor Material Amendment to conditions 2 and 6 of Y11/0284/SH (Redevelopment of former gas works site following demolition of existing fishmongers and huts to provide a mixed use development of 60 dwellings, 9 commercial and recreational huts and conversion of two former lifeboat stations including change of use from assembly and leisure (Class D2) to fishmongers) to allow for alterations to and enlargement of blocks B and F and lowering of finished floor levels within the development

Y14/1094/SH - Folkestone Primary Academy Park Farm Road Folkestone Kent CT19 5DN - Reserved matters application for details of appearance and landscaping for the construction of 84 dwellings (Class C3) being details pursuant to Phase 1 of outline planning permission reference Y11/1132/SH.

Representations can be made in writing either on line on the Council's website, by email to planning@shepway.gov.uk or in writing to the Head of Planning and Environmental Health, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY. Please always quote the application reference number. Comments should be made in writing within 21 days from the date of publication. Please note that any representations received will be publically viewable on the Council's website.

Some applications can be viewed at other locations in addition to the Civic Centre, Folkestone. The applications are marked as follows:

- The One Stop Shop, Magpies, Church Approach, New Romney

+ - Hythe Town Council Offices, Stade Street, Hythe

The applications marked (*) do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated.

Note: This is not a full list of applications received. All planning applications can be viewed and comments made online at http://searchplanapps.shepway.gov.uk/online-applications/.

C Lewis, Head of Planning and Environmental Health
Shepway District Council

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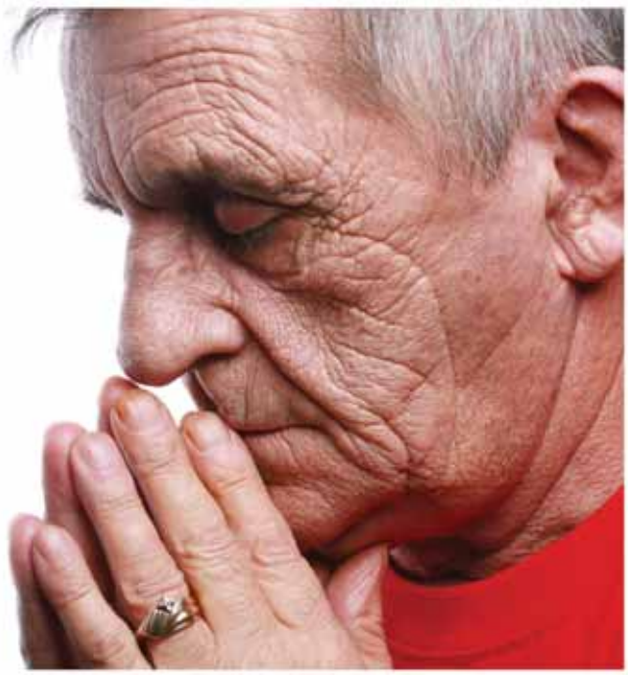
This man was in the news every day for 15 years...



...he is a widower and he lives alone. Bill once ran his own newspaper and magazine stand but having retired, struggled to do his shopping and housework due to severe mobility problems. Help was a luxury that he simply could not afford, his only income being the state pension. Following a referral to NewstrAid, Bill was provided with advice which helped him secure additional income and a full rebate on his council tax. NewstrAid also funded a mobility scooter which allows him to gain access to local shops and amenities. A great many people are employed in the news distribution trade - some just like Bill are suffering through illness and others may have just fallen on hard times.

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Edinburgh looks up table for Gills

He is excited by his team and keen to keep it winning games

EDINBURGH: Off to a good start as manager of the Gills

Picture: ADY KERRY

Football

By Jamie Weir
Jamie.Weir@archant.co.uk

GILLINGHAM'S new manager Justin Edinburgh got off to a great start with his side beating Peterborough 2-1.

Edinburgh, who was unveiled to fans before the squad's 2-0 win against Sheffield United, has said he was delighted with the team's performance.

The 45-year-old signed to the Gills on a two-and-a-half-year deal, saying that he was excited by the club's prospects.

He said: "The chairman's drive and ambition for the club and the future was clear to see and after watching the squad closely there is development here.

"The fan base is here, the ambition is here and the chairman said there is a ship ready to sail that needs a captain. I feel I am the man to do that."

Gillingham, who had travelled away to Peterborough's London Road stadium, initially struggled to get going.

But after a difficult start to the game, the team found their feet with midfielder Bradley Dack putting them in the lead.

Peterborough managed to equalise just before half time, but the Gills were in control when they came back out after the break.

As the clock ticked away, all eyes were on Gillingham, and it was John Marquis who got the goal.

The striker, who is on loan from Millwall, managed to tuck away a low cross just 11 minutes before the final whistle, with the Gills taking the full three points.

Edinburgh said the win was a great way to kick off his time at Gillingham saying that he'll be looking to help take the team up the table after a form slump saw them slip.

He said: "We've got to look up rather than down, that's me as a person.

"You need to have an ambition to try and over achieve and that's the task we'll set the players. If you do that then you're going to be successful."

Speaking about how he'll keep pushing the team higher, he said: "You've got to play to the strengths of the players, there is a team here full of enthusiasm – maybe we need to tighten up without the ball.

"Your philosophy has got to be winning football matches with a certain style, but winning breeds confidence and any person that has played football knows that plays a major part in the way you play."

Lacklustre Mos see championship slip away

THE Dynamos saw their hopes of moving to the top of the NIHL South Division 1 slip away after a disastrous showing against league leaders Chelmsford Chieftains.

The Mos fell to a 9-0 loss despite having home advantage when the game was played at their Silver Blades rink in Gillingham.

Despite an early surge from the Mos, who knew a win would mean they could take the title, the Chieftains held on and remained in control of the game.

Once they had survived the opening bombardment from the Dynamos, the Chieftains started to wear the Kent team down.

The Chieftains managed to score their first goal after 12 minutes, with Daniel Hammond breaking free of the Mos defence, firing a sharp backhander in from close range.

KEVIN PARRISH: Manager under pressure as the Dynamos slip

After that first taste of success, the floodgates opened, with the Dynamos found frequently surrendering ground and allowing the Chieftains to capitalise on their possession of the puck.

Chelmsford made them pay with strong attacks while simultaneously putting up good defences.

The Chieftains managed to bank the next eight goals with little resistance, outclassing the Dynamos in what was a crucial game for them.

Despite the embarrassing defeat for the Mos, they are still sitting fairly comfortably in the league.

They currently sit second in the league ahead of a clash with mid-table Milton Keynes Thunder tonight.

The team is unlikely to be in a title race though, the Chieftains comfortably lead the division by two points, with three games in hand.

Sport Shorts

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Dover exit FA Trophy after 2-1 Bath City loss

THE Whites were knocked out of the FA Trophy after losing their quarter final replay to Bath City 2-1.

The team lost the match - played away at Bath's Twerton Park stadium - after the hosts scored two first half goals.

Bath striker Dave Pratt grabbed the first goal and Chas Hemmings the second.

Hemmings almost made it a hat-trick, hitting the woodwork with a free kick.

In their previous match against Bath City, Dover had managed to come back from a two goal deficit, earning themselves a 3-3 draw.

But this time, the fairy-tale ending was not on the cards.

Despite Whites defender Tyrone Sterling managing to steal a good goal back, and substitute James Poole coming close to equalising with a header the team's fate was sealed.

The loss saw Dover exit the FA Trophy, ending the team's dreams of Wembley glory. They were the last Kent team left in the tournament.

KINNEAR: Unlikely to be happy with the loss

BLUES: Under 18 squad could go all the way

Manager backs team to lift the Ullman Cup

MARGATE FC's under 18 manager, Paul Robinson, has said that he believes the squad can win the John Ullman Cup after they beat Croyden FC under 18s at Hartsdown Park.

The win took the team through to the quarter finals of the tournament.

During the game, Blues players Seb Rowland and James Mileham scored the two goals, either side of the Croyden equalizer.

Robinson thinks his team can go all the way now.

He said: ''I think we can win it definitely. We showed good character last night and we will play whoever we have to face and play the same against them.''

The manager was full of praise for the squad, singling out Mileham for praise.

He said: ''James has missed a few chances in some games but he is a great lad. He is superb at holding up the ball and is a real target man up front.

''He took his goal fantastically and deserves that but as a team we deserved the win and all the players deserve the credit.''

Academy cricketers off on tour

KENT County Cricket Club head coach Jimmy Adams has taken 22-year-old all-rounder Fabian Cowdrey and three academy players to India on a ten-day tour of Andhra Pradesh in India to hone their skills.

The group has gone to polish their cricket skills after being invited by the Andhra Cricket Association.

They will be allowed to use the state's cricket facilities, while also getting to work with local youngsters in the build up to the 2015 season.

The group has already practised at the ACA-VCDA cricket stadium, taking the field against Andhra academy players and getting to bat against a wide variety of bowling styles.

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